THE BOY FROM THE WEST

A STORY OF ST. TIMOTHY'S

ARTHUR STANWOOD PIER

$1.75

THE BOY FROM THE WEST

By Arthur Stanwood Pier

In this new St. Timothy's story, Mr. Pier has written one of the very best of the stories that have appeared since 'Harding of St. Timothy's.' It is full of the active life of the school — football, hockey, rowing, swimming, water tournaments, skating, and coasting, among games, and a competition for the school paper that involves some very interesting and often amusing complications. The hero's friendship for another new boy, who is less competent and self-reliant than himself, plays a large part in the story.

Mr. Pier has an unusual gift for making his tale inspiring without making it dry. This is one of the sound additions to the boys' list. It is illustrated with full pages in black and white by Kleber Hall.

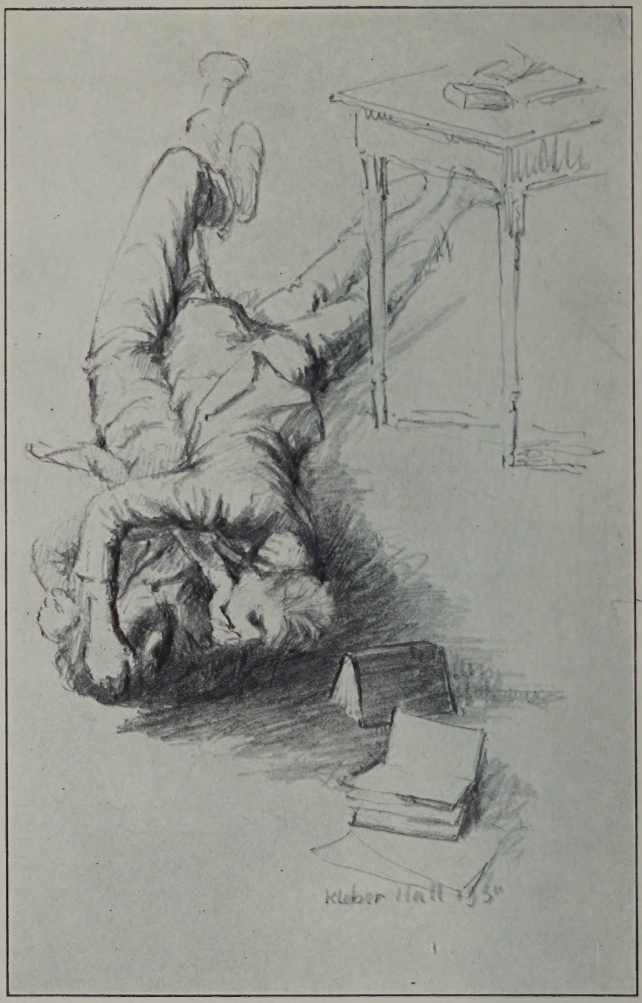
THE BOY FROM THE WEST

ARTHUR STANWOOD PIER

REFERENCE LIBRARY * HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO. * BOSTON, MASS.
Archive
Collection

This book may not leave the Offices
and if borrowed must be returned within 7 days

THE BOY FROM THE WEST



HENRY AND DINSMORE WERE PRETTY EVENLY MATCHED (*page* 40)

THE BOY FROM THE WEST

A Story of St. Timothy's

BY

ARTHUR STANWOOD PIER

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
KLEBER HALL

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge
1930

COPYRIGHT, 1930, BY ARTHUR S. PIER

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO REPRODUCE
THIS BOOK OR PARTS THEREOF IN ANY FORM

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE · MASSACHUSETTS
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

CONTENTS

I.	The Next-Door Neighbor	1
II.	Henry Gives His Name	17
III.	Earle Declines to Translate	30
IV.	A Candidate for the Sixth Eleven	49
V.	California Stuff	61
VI.	Winter Sports	86
VII.	Vacation Lessons	97
VIII.	Literary Ambitions	114
IX.	The New Editor	129
X.	'Nothing Doing'	142
XI.	The Deadlock	158
XII.	Breaking the Deadlock	171
XIII.	Knight of the Bath	188
XIV.	One Way to Win	206
XV.	Something to Write Home About	224

ILLUSTRATIONS

HENRY AND DINSMORE WERE PRETTY EVENLY MATCHED *Frontispiece*

HENRY BURST THROUGH AND TACKLED CORCORAN 50

AMAZED THE OTHER FELLOWS BY HIS SPEED 112

THE CLASH WAS BRIEF 194

THE BOY FROM THE WEST

I

THE NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR

HENRY'S trunk had not yet come; there was nothing that he could do about getting settled in his room beyond disposing of the contents of his suit-case in bureau drawers or in his laundry bag — mostly in the latter, for he and his father had spent the last five days in trains, journeying from Southern California to New Hampshire. Partly on account of their need of exercise after the long trip, partly from a natural curiosity to investigate these new surroundings, they had spent most of the day — since their interview in the morning with the rector — in wandering about the grounds and buildings of St. Timothy's School and along the country roads in the vicinity. It was a warm and sunny day in late September — so warm that Henry, who in all his sixteen years had never before been east of California, expressed to his father his surprise that the weather in New England at this season should not be so very different from that to which he had been accustomed at home.

'You will find it can be very different,' replied

his father, who had spent four years in a New England college. 'You had better make the most of days like these when they come.'

Henry did not reply. He only knew that he wanted to make the most of this last day that he would have with his father for many months to come. So they sauntered together through the pine woods by the school pond and out along the road by the sawmill; they inspected the school farm; they entered the great dining-hall of the Upper School and looked at the portraits of past and present worthies of St. Timothy's that hung on the walls; they entered the chapel and admired the lofty vaulted roof and the carved benches and stalls and the stained glass; they visited the playing fields and the squash courts and the Library, in front of which on a pedestal overlooking the pond stood the bronze figure of a young soldier, the School's war memorial; then they returned to the small dormitory in which with about thirty other boys Henry was to be quartered. They sat in the two chairs that constituted exactly two fifths of its furnishing, the remaining three fifths being a bed, a desk, and a chest of drawers; and from time to time Henry's father would say cheerfully, 'I think you're going to be very happy here, Henry,' and Henry would reply with equal cheerfulness, 'You bet I am.' Mr. Libby, the young

master in charge of the dormitory, looked in on them through the open door, stopped, and for a few moments chatted pleasantly.

'It will be livelier to-morrow when the old boys come back,' he said. 'This first day, when the new boys arrive — I suppose, Henry, you don't find it very exciting?'

'I don't mind it,' Henry said.

'You'll soon make the acquaintance of the fellows on this floor. There are three other new boys — Phillips, Danforth, and Castleman, all like you in the Fourth Form. Phillips is from Chicago, and Danforth and Castleman are from New York. You're the only Californian in the building.'

'I'll try not to be too lonely,' said Henry.

With a satisfied glance at Henry's stalwart figure and smiling lips and clear blue eyes the young master said, 'You won't be.'

'Seems like a good sort of fellow,' said Henry's father after the master had gone.

'I guess they all are,' said Henry.

'His saying you're the only Californian — I may as well repeat what I've told you so often, Henry. One of my reasons for sending you to this school, remember, is to give you an understanding of other points of view than the one you're used to. Most Americans think their own little section of the country is the only one worth

considering; they disparage other sections. But though this is a big country, the parts of it are more or less dependent on one another, and it's desirable to substitute sympathy and coöperation for prejudice and provinciality. If all the Easterners could be educated in the West, and all the Westerners in the East, and all the Southerners in the North, and all the Northerners in the South, it might be a good thing for the country. So by sending you from California to New Hampshire I'm doing for the country what I can.'

'I suppose fellows everywhere are pretty much alike,' said Henry.

'There are all kinds,' said his father.

Footsteps sounded in the corridor; a moment later Henry had a glimpse of a boy accompanied by his mother passing the door. The boy was tall and slight, round-shouldered and dejected-looking. He and his mother entered the room next to Henry's; the opening and closing of drawers and the moving about of furniture indicated that he was in process of getting unpacked and settled.

Henry heard the boy's mother say in a cheerful voice, 'You have a nice room, Earle, and I'm sure you're going to be very happy here.'

Then Henry heard the forlorn response: 'I don't know why you think so.'

Henry glanced at his father with a faint smile.

'I don't think it will be so bad,' he said, in a low voice that could not reach the occupants of the adjoining room.

'Try to help the fellows that feel differently,' said his father in an equally subdued voice. He looked at his watch and said reluctantly, 'I suppose I ought soon to be going to the station. You might walk over to the rector's study with me; I think I should bid him good-bye.'

They walked along the road by the Library and the pond and entered the building in which the rector had his office. They found the office closed; they crossed the road and rang the rectory doorbell. The maid who responded said that Dr. Davenport was in but was engaged at the moment; would they wait? Henry's father glanced at his watch; there was still twenty minutes before the taxicab which was to take him to the train would arrive. He and Henry were ushered into a small room just off Dr. Davenport's library.

The door into the library was partly open; the quiet tones of the rector's voice reached the ears of the visitors though his words were not distinguishable. Then the person who was with him began to speak, in more penetrating tones. While he spoke Henry's father addressed various remarks to his son in order that Dr. Davenport

and his caller might be aware of the presence of others who could overhear what was being said; but the warnings had no effect on the speaker, and whether willingly or unwillingly Henry and his father could not escape receiving the information that was being conveyed to the rector.

'Yes, it's worried his mother and me to know what to do. Ever since that illness Earle's been not exactly delicate but less rugged than most boys of his age. And he's got now what I suppose a psychologist would call an inferiority complex. No self-confidence. Shy about learning to do new things because he thinks pretty nearly everybody can do them better. Ready to agree with almost anybody on anything. He needs strengthening all round. Mentally he's all right, but we're at our wits' end to know what to do to give him confidence and courage.'

The rector's comment was inaudible but evidently reassuring, for there was a note of gratitude in the visitor's reply.

'I felt that in a school like this there would be the best chance to build him up, and I'm more sure of it now. Mrs. Castleman will be mighty glad to hear what you say. She's helping the boy to fix up his room; it's about time I was getting back to them. Good-bye, Dr. Davenport.'

Henry and his father had a glimpse of the tall, gray-haired gentleman whom Dr. Davenport ac-

companied out into the hallway. Henry remembered that the boy in the room next to his had been addressed by his mother as Earle and that of the three other new boys in the dormitory one was named Castleman. So his next-door neighbor was Earle Castleman, a fellow with an inferiority complex. It would have been pleasanter to find that he was living next door to some husky athlete. Still, he would probably not have to see Castleman very much if he found he didn't like him.

A moment later the rector entered the room and expressed his regret at having been obliged to keep the visitors waiting.

'I was talking, as it happened, with the father of the boy who is to live next door to you, Henry,' he said. 'His name is Earle Castleman. One of the results of a long illness has been to reduce his self-confidence. He had to be taken out of the last school he went to because there the contacts with the other boys seemed only to accentuate his sense of inferiority. Perhaps you'll find it possible to give him a little encouragement now and then.'

'I'll do what I can,' Henry answered.

His father expressed his satisfaction with all that he had seen of the School and its surroundings and said that he could go back to California happy in the thought of Henry's happiness. He

shook hands then with Dr. Davenport, bade him good-bye, and went out with Henry to wait in front of the study building for the arrival of the taxicab. Standing there with his hand clasping the boy's arm, he improved the last few minutes that he was to have with his son for a long time by giving him a little talk on a subject that they had occasionally discussed before — his name.

'Don't be sensitive about it, Henry,' he said. 'I know that even at home, where your grandfather was so well known and the reason for giving you the name was so obvious, you and other people often had occasion to think your parents were inconsiderate and lacking in humor to christen you as we did. You've had to endure such jokes as I often heard for some time after I had been fortunate enough to become engaged to your mother. There was something about the combination of names that struck our friends as irresistibly comic. But we didn't mind — in fact, we rather enjoyed it. And when it came to naming you, although we could see the disadvantages of carrying on the combination, the desire to pay that tribute to your grandfather prevailed. And it pleased him immensely.'

'I've never felt that you and Mother owed me an apology for giving me his name,' Henry said. 'As a matter of fact, I've got a good deal of fun out of it, and I can see where, in this place, I shall

have some more. Besides, I should like to be a credit to Grandfather as well as to you.'

'I wasn't going to offer you an apology. In fact, I want to suggest some reasons why you should be especially grateful to your mother and me for bestowing that name on you. It will be a joke of course to every boy that hears it. But it is a name that carries a certain implication of excellence — a high standard in conduct and achievement. Try to live up to it.'

Henry laughed. 'I'll try, but honestly, Dad, I guess it fits me better as a joke than as a — a symbol.'

'Show you appreciate it from both points of view. It will make it all the easier for you to become acquainted with other fellows. A name that is peculiar or absurd has this advantage; if the man who bears it does distinguish himself, his fame travels a little faster than it would if his name were Jones or Smith. But that's unimportant. I'm not afraid that you won't take in good part the jokes and jeers that your name will excite; I do want you to try never to do anything that will make the name more ridiculous than it already is.'

'When you've said that, Dad, you've said a mouthful,' replied Henry. 'I get you; I'll do my best.'

'Your conversation is usually in character

with your name anyway, Henry,' remarked his father.

It was better, he thought, that they should part on a light rather than on a solemn note, and he laughed and speculated aloud as to the probability of improvement in Henry's use of language under the influence of his St. Timothy's associations. He was still rallying Henry on the subject when the taxicab for which he was waiting arrived. Then he said, 'Good-bye, my boy; you'll write to us often, won't you?'

'Yes,' said Henry. 'Hope you have a good trip home, Dad. Good-bye.'

They kissed each other; Henry's father stepped into the taxicab and in another moment he was gone. And then for a moment Henry felt a queer sinking of the heart and a sense of utter loneliness. He stood watching the taxicab until it disappeared from sight; then he turned and began aimlessly to walk along the road. He wished that some fellow would come up and speak to him. While he strolled on, an automobile swung out of the road leading to his dormitory and passed him; he saw that in it were Mr. and Mrs. Castleman. They were probably on their way to take the same train that his father was taking. He might go and look up that fellow with the inferiority complex. It sounded pretty unattractive, but the fellow might have his good points,

and anyway he would be some one to talk to.

So, quite cheerful now that he had an immediate purpose in view, he turned his steps briskly towards the dormitory. But when he walked down the corridor he saw that Castleman's door was closed, and he stopped, undecided whether to break in on a fellow who evidently wanted to shut people out. As he stood, hesitating, there came from behind the closed door a sound that caused him to shrink back, confused, horrified — the sound, stifled, but unmistakable, of a boy sobbing.

'He oughtn't to do that,' Henry thought. 'Some one might hear him!'

Certainly it would never do for him to go in now. He tiptoed out of the building and wandered about for a while; then he decided that the fellow must have stopped crying by this time, and he went back. After making sure that the sounds which had been so disturbing had ceased, he knocked on Castleman's door. There was a moment of silence, then a voice said, 'Come in.'

Henry, opening the door, saw Castleman standing by the desk and facing him with a look timid and questioning.

'Hello,' said Henry. 'I have the room next door. You're pretty well settled, aren't you?'

He glanced round the room, noticing the framed photographs and ivory-backed brushes

on the bureau, the hunting prints on the walls, the handsome rug on the floor. 'I wish my room looked the way yours does. My things haven't come yet.'

'I don't feel as if I'd ever really feel settled here,' said Castleman.

'It certainly is lonesome at first. That's why I thought I'd look in on you.'

Castleman said, 'Won't you sit down?' and then he and Henry sat and seemed to have nothing very much to say to each other. Castleman showed a momentary interest on hearing that Henry was from California and exclaimed, 'How will you get home at Christmas and Easter?'

'I shan't go home,' said Henry. 'Too long a trip for such short vacations. I shall have to stay here. I suppose there will be others.'

'That's terrible,' said Castleman. 'To have to stay here for Christmas!'

He looked at Henry in a way that showed he had for the moment stopped being sorry for himself and was possessed by a sense of the even greater misfortune that boarding school meant to his visitor. Henry was uncertain whether to be pleased or not at the success of his maneuvers, which had been designed to turn Castleman's thoughts out of their melancholy channel

'I'm not worrying now about what's going to

happen at Christmas,' Henry said. 'That's a long way off. — Do you play football?'

'No,' said Castleman. 'I'm no good at any games.'

'Well,' said Henry, 'then you're probably a shark at your lessons and good at writing and things of that kind.'

'No,' said Castleman, 'I'm no good at anything.'

This was certainly discouraging, thought Henry.

'I guess we'll all of us have to show we're good at making our beds,' he remarked. 'They say that if a fellow doesn't make a good-looking bed every morning he's out of luck.'

'I took some lessons in bed-making from the chambermaid at home,' said Castleman. 'I think I ought to be able to do that all right. It must be easier to make one of these little beds than the old four-poster I tried to learn on.'

'I knew you must be good at something,' said Henry.

At once Castleman flushed, whether from the thought that he had appeared to be boasting or that he was being complimented satirically on an accomplishment not worth mentioning Henry could not be sure. But the sudden rush of color to his cheeks showed how absurdly sensitive he was.

Mr. Libby came in to give the two new boys a little instruction and encouragement.

'Supper will be in half an hour,' he said. 'You will take your meals in the new dining-hall across the road from the Library. It's brand new this year, and we're all of us looking forward to having specially good food there. You see, I eat there too, so I'm as much interested as you fellows.'

'Do they ever give ice cream?' asked Henry.

'Twice a week — Sunday and Wednesday. And there's always enough for two helpings.'

'That's good news. — What happens to a fellow, Mr. Libby, if he's sort of sloppy in the way he makes his bed?'

'That's out of my jurisdiction. Next Saturday evening there will be a meeting of all you fellows on this floor in my room for the purpose of electing an inspector. The second-floor fellows will hold a similar meeting in Mr. Bolton's room. It's the duty of the inspectors to visit all the rooms on their floors between breakfast and chapel every morning, and if they find a room that's untidy or one in which a bed isn't properly made, they give the fellow a "dust." If he gets three dusts in two weeks, he receives a demerit, and if he receives four demerits in a term he doesn't get the extra day of vacation that is given to the fellows who are in good standing.'

'I hope we'll elect some fellow that will be an easy inspector,' said Henry.

'If an inspector is too easy, the supervisor comes down on him. The supervisor is a Sixth Former who is assigned to the dormitory. Each term a new inspector is elected and the supervisors are changed. That makes it possible for various fellows to have a share in the responsibility.'

'I don't suppose any new fellows ever get a chance,' said Henry, wistfully yet not without a note of hopefulness in his voice.

'Not often. And the inspectors are likely to be a little more particular in their scrutiny of the rooms of new boys than of old ones. But at least you'll have a chance to vote for the fellow that you think would make the fairest inspector.'

'We're so green, how are we going to know?' asked Henry.

'You'll have a few days to look the old fellows over in before you vote,' said Mr. Libby. 'After they come back to-morrow you'll probably have quite definite impressions about them very soon.'

Castleman shivered a little at the thought of the old fellows coming back, but it was an event to which Henry was now eagerly looking forward. There couldn't be any sports, there couldn't be any fun until the old fellows did re-

turn, and as for him, the sooner he made their acquaintance the better.

He and Castleman and the other new boys, of whom there were about sixty, ranging in age from twelve to seventeen, had supper in the new dining-hall opposite the Library. Henry sat next to Castleman and looked after his welfare — called on strange boys to pass him the butter and the milk when Castleman, rather than lift his voice or stretch out his arm, was meekly letting his wants go unfilled. Mr. Libby sat at the head of the table and sent plates of cold tongue rapidly down each side of it. He set conversation going by asking each boy to state where he came from and announced that the fellow who had journeyed the longest distance should have as a prize a third helping, if he wanted it, of prunes — a jest which was received with not too tumultuous laughter. Henry was awarded the prize and declined it. But Mr. Libby's sally had succeeded in loosening the tongues of most of the boys and making it possible for them to satisfy something of their curiosity about one another. Only Castleman sat in a subdued silence.

II

HENRY GIVES HIS NAME

THE next morning Henry's trunk came, and for a time he was busily occupied in unpacking and arranging his belongings. Castleman hung about uneasily, offered his services if he could be of any assistance, and when they were declined with thanks, lingered in the corridor, looking in at Henry through the open door. Henry suspected that Castleman was too timid to venture far, on this day when the old boys would soon be arriving, from the presence of one who had shown himself disposed to be friendly.

Then suddenly the old boys began to arrive. From his window Henry could see automobiles come rolling down the road from the town and stop before the dormitories; he could see boys get out of them and enter the buildings with an air of assurance. He saw a car stop in front of the dormitory in which he was lodged. Two fellows of sixteen or seventeen emerged from it; Henry watched them from the window while they paid the driver. They were laughing and looked good-natured; one was tall and broad-shouldered, the other was short and thick set;

the tall fellow had dark hair and a thin face with a thin aquiline nose; the short fellow was sandy-haired and round-faced and snub-nosed. Henry saw them as they turned, laughing and talking, towards the entrance, carrying their bags; a moment later he heard their noisy steps and cheerful voices in the corridor.

Earle Castleman was standing just outside Henry's door.

'Out of the way, new kid!' shouted one of the pair, and before Earle, startled, could move, they bore down on him with locked arms and lowered heads, their bags banging against the walls on either side. Rushing him the length of the corridor, they flung him with considerable violence against the wall at the farther end. Then with a shout of laughter they abandoned him and, separating, went into the rooms that had been assigned to them. Henry had hastened out into the corridor at the sound of the onslaught; he saw Earle Castleman, bewildered and resentful, come slowly back up the corridor, and turn into his room. Then Earle closed the door, and Henry went back to his work of unpacking.

He wished that he and not Earle had been standing in the corridor when those two fellows came in. They wouldn't have found it so easy to hustle him; he wouldn't have minded having a

scrap with them — good-natured, of course; any one could see by the way they had rushed at Earle that it was all in fun. But Earle had taken it wrong — dazed and silent and gloomy — shutting himself up right after it — no way at all to act. How was a fellow who behaved like that ever going to get on with fellows?

The gong announcing that it was time to move over to the dining-hall for lunch sounded. Henry, brushing his hair, heard the two fellows who had so recently arrived come out of their rooms and come tramping up the corridor. Then he heard a tremendous bang from the blow of a fist or a foot on Earle Castleman's closed door and a burst of laughter from the marching pair, who did not pause to follow up their passing salutation with further attentions. They glanced in at Henry and his room with some curiosity, but their appetites were pressing and they did not pause.

After the outer door of the dormitory had closed behind them, Earle Castleman's door opened. Henry called to him, 'Come along, Castleman; we don't want to be late.'

Earle kept pace reluctantly with Henry's brisk steps.

'Did you see those fellows?' he asked. 'Those two that went for me — and then tried to kick my door in?'

'Yes. Nice-looking fellows both of them,' Henry answered.

'Bullies, that's what they are. I knew that's what I'd run into right off,' said Earle resignedly.

'Oh, I'd say they ran into you rather than that you ran into them,' said Henry with a grin. 'Don't feel so hurt by such little things.'

'I don't see why they pick on me right off that way.'

'It was just chance. You happened to be out in the corridor. If I'd been there instead of you, I'd have been the goat. And then when you sort of crawled off and shut your door — why, that naturally made them want to kick it.'

'Why should it?'

'Why, a fellow is just made that way.'

'I don't think I am.'

'No, I guess you're not.' Henry grinned again and took Earle by the arm. 'Well, you'll have to make allowances for fellows that are different. — Hurry up now, or we'll be late for lunch.'

When they entered the dining-room and saw that at Mr. Libby's table, to which they had been permanently assigned, the two fellows who had taken such liberties with Earle and his door were standing side by side, Henry was pleased and Earle felt consternation. They took their seats which were directly opposite the pair,

Earle blushing and casting down his eyes under the amused glance of the tall, dark-haired fellow. As the meal proceeded, without any verbal molestation from either of the two awe-inspiring personages, Earle ventured to engage now and then in subdued conversation with Henry and with a younger boy who sat on the other side of him. The dining-room was livelier than it had been during the meals when only new boys were present. Nearly all the seats at the tables were filled, and the chatter of the fellows who had come back to the school after the long vacation was eager and unceasing. Mr. Libby did not trouble himself to introduce any of the new boys to the two old fellows, the taller of whom he addressed as Reed, the shorter as Dinsmore, and both Reed and Dinsmore somewhat ostentatiously ignored the others. From their conversation Henry gathered that they regarded the seating arrangement as merely temporary and looked forward to being placed at a table with some of their friends the next day. To Henry, who found them attractive, the discovery of this expectation on their part was disappointing; to Earle, it was extremely welcome. Their conversation with each other, which was concerned mainly with boat races in which they had sailed during the summer at Marblehead and in Buzzards Bay, had a special fascination for Henry's ear.

These fellows, as he learned, came from Boston; never before had he heard the English language spoken as they spoke it. If their actions and appearance had not already convinced him to the contrary, he would have said that they must be affected, foppish persons, both of them, aping the Londoner's tricks of speech.

'I'm awfully glad those fellows Reed and Dinsmore aren't going to be permanently at our table,' Earle confided to Henry after lunch when they were returning together to their dormitory.

'I'm sorry,' Henry replied. 'I like their looks.'

'Their looks may be all right. It's their actions I object to.'

'That's the way to talk,' said Henry encouragingly. 'You've got some pep, if you aren't always afraid to show it.'

'I don't know what you mean.' Earle spoke distrustfully; it was clear that he was always suspecting fellows of laughing at him.

'Why, I meant that I think you might be quite snappy sometimes if you would just let yourself go,' said Henry carelessly. 'But I don't know you very well. So I may have got you all wrong.'

He was growing a little tired of Earle and his sensitiveness, and it irritated him now to see that at his blunt speech Earle blushed and looked unhappy. Really a fellow ought not to have such absurdly tender feelings.

'I wish I could get some good hard exercise today — with some fun to it,' he said. 'Tennis or baseball or something. It's a pity you don't play any game, Earle.'

'I never was good at games,' Earle answered.

'You might learn to be. I'll take you on at tennis this afternoon.'

'It won't be any fun for you.'

'If it isn't, we can stop.'

So half an hour later Earle and Henry were playing tennis together on one of the courts adjoining the St. Timothy's baseball field. Other games of tennis were in progress near them, and on the ball field a game of scrub baseball had been organized and was going on with much noisy shouting. After not many minutes of tennis with Earle, Henry began to cast longing eyes towards the ball game. Earle had not understated the facts when he had said that he was no good at games.

Patiently Henry tried to coach him; he explained to him that he must not run into the ball, that he should keep his eye on it, that he should swing his racquet instead of poking with it; but the more patiently and earnestly he labored, the more uncomfortable did his pupil become. And suddenly Earle walked off the court and picked up his racquet case.

'I'm not going to keep you here teaching me

any longer,' he said. 'It's no fun for you, and I'm too stupid at games ever to learn.'

'You mustn't feel that way about it,' said Henry. 'You can't expect to learn any game all at once.'

Earle thanked him and said he hoped he would find some one who could give him a game; then he turned his steps back towards the dormitory. Henry had a sense of relief at seeing him depart; now there might be a chance perhaps of having some fun! He moved at once to the baseball field; the scrub game that had been started early in the afternoon had ceased, and instead the tall fellow Reed was knocking out flies to half a dozen others whom he had driven quite to the outskirts of the grounds and who had to relay the ball in by means of a youth stationed midway between them and the batter.

'A dirty muff!' shouted Reed, beating the ground with his bat. 'Butterfingers Dinsmore! Oh, rotten!' He looked at Henry and grinned, and Henry grinned responsively. 'Stings their hands so they can't hold it,' Reed remarked to Henry. He grinned again, this time with a challenge in his blue eyes. 'They want some one to bat to them that can't hit the ball so far or so hard. You look about right. Want to try?'

'I'm on,' said Henry, tossing his tennis racquet to the ground.

While Reed ran out into the field, Henry tightened his belt and rolled up his sleeves. Then he picked up the ball and the bat, and tossing the ball in the air, swung at it with all his strength. It traveled almost but not quite as far as the last fly that Reed had hit; the fellow who got under it caught it neatly. Henry tried again and yet again, and on the third effort had the satisfaction of seeing his hit carry quite as far as that of his challenger had done.

After he had batted out flies for a while, one of the other fellows called 'Don't you want some fielding practice?' So Henry changed places with him, borrowing his glove, and had an opportunity to show that his skill as an out-fielder was not inferior to his prowess as a 'fungo' hitter.

Presently a bell rang from the distant Study building.

'We'll have to call it a day,' said Reed. He tucked his arm inside Henry's and said, 'My name's Reed; this fellow here is Dinsmore, and this is Williams. What's your name?'

'Henry Dunn Noble,' said Henry.

Reed's mouth hung open; Dinsmore and Williams giggled.

'No, but jesting aside, as they say in the books,' said Reed, 'what *is* your name?'

'That's it,' said Henry. 'Henry Dunn Noble.'

Then Reed shouted with laughter and dragged

Henry about, roaring in enjoyment. 'Henry Dunn Noble! Henry Dunn Noble!' The other fellows laughed as much from the contagion of Reed's mirth as from their own amusement at the humor of Henry's name.

'Do you always give your name in full?' Reed asked.

'When I want to give people pleasure,' Henry answered.

Reed was unwilling to relinquish his hold on this pleasure-giving 'new kid.' Arm in arm with him and closely followed by Dinsmore and Williams and three or four others, he paraded him along the walk to the Study building, proclaiming his name to every group or individual that they met or passed; — 'Make way for Nature's Nobleman — Henry Dunn Noble!' The procession increased in size, and by the time it reached the dormitory there were between twenty and thirty fellows following in the burlesque triumphal march of the 'new kid.' Down the corridor Reed led him, flinging open every door to summon the occupant of each room to 'Meet Nature's Nobleman, Henry Dunn Noble.' He threw open Earle Castleman's door and then, seeing the startled face of the fellow whom he had rushed unceremoniously down the corridor, he exclaimed, 'Hello, old top! Meet Nature's Nobleman, Henry Dunn Noble.'

'No wonder he looks goggle-eyed,' said Dinsmore, observing Earle's bewildered expression. 'That's his name; it is, really. What's your name, new kid?'

'Castleman,' said Earle. 'Earle Castleman.'

'Castleman and Nobleman, right next door to each other!' said Reed. 'Earle Castleman too! Pretty aristocratic new kids we've got here this term. Earle Castleman, meet Duke Dinsmore.'

'My name isn't really Duke, you know,' said Dinsmore, solemnly, shaking hands with Earle. 'You don't need to call me Your Grace — unless you want to.'

'You'd be about as likely to give that name to a motor truck, wouldn't you, Castleman?' said Reed.

'Careful now, Castleman!' warned Dinsmore.

'Wouldn't you, Castleman?' insisted Reed.

'Careful, careful!' repeated Dinsmore, edging closer.

'Wouldn't you, Castleman?' Reed edged in closer still. The other fellows, all except Henry, stood watching and grinning; Henry stood looking on puzzled, a frown gathering on his face as the two fellows closed in on Castleman.

'Wouldn't you, Castleman?' Reed said again urgently, with his face quite close to Earle's.

'Why yes, I guess so,' Earle said with a forced laugh.

'An insult, an insult!' Dinsmore shouted, and plunging forward he tackled Earle and threw him on his bed, where he at once bestrode him, and twisting his wrists together in a firm grip began to bounce up and down on him, riding him in a manner quite excruciating to the victim.

'Ease off!' said Henry, and he took Dinsmore by the neck with one hand and applied such violent pressure with his thumb and fingers that Dinsmore rolled off the bed and grappled furiously with his assailant. Back and forth in Castleman's room the wrestlers struggled, banging against the bureau, the chairs, the bed; finally, Henry bore his antagonist out through the doorway into the corridor, where the combat raged to the intense delight of the spectators, neither one being able to down the other and each in turn being jammed and battered against the walls. So, with the outcome still in doubt, they were engaged when Mr. Libby suddenly appeared and said, 'Here, boys! Quiet now! Break away, you two!'

Dinsmore and Henry obeyed the command and stood, breathing hard, disheveled, grinning.

'I don't want to start the year by giving all

you fellows demerits,' said Mr. Libby. 'Go to your rooms now, and get quietly to work.'

Reed slipped his arm inside Henry's before he moved away and murmured in his ear, 'Henry Dunn Noble!'

III

EARLE DECLINES TO TRANSLATE

THANKS to Reed and Dinsmore and Williams the fame of Henry Dunn Noble spread rapidly through the school. At breakfast the next morning he was made aware of the fact that fellows at other tables were turning to look at him or to point him out to their neighbors. After breakfast was over and the process of bed-making had been hastily completed, Reed and Dinsmore stopped in Henry's room and summoned him to walk with them to chapel. Earle followed at some distance behind. When they came in front of the Study, two impudent youngsters of the Third Form who during breakfast had been squirming round in their seats at the next table to Henry's and grinning at him, swaggered up to him and said boldly in concert, 'Hey, fellow, what's your name?'

Henry reached out and seized the nearer one of the two questioners by the collar of his coat and the seat of his trousers; he lifted him off the ground and held him horizontal in the air, sprawling. 'Henry done noble not to rub your face in the dirt,' he said and deposited the scared

youngster gently on his hands and knees on the walk, whence he arose and scuttled away amidst the laughter of the spectators, resolved never again to tempt the clutches of any one so strong. Immediately Henry became the center of an amused and interested gathering, and Reed with characteristic gusto introduced him as 'the finest new kid since I entered the School — one of Nature's noblemen.'

Thus Henry became within the first forty-eight hours of his stay at St. Timothy's one of the conspicuous and talked-of figures. When he rose in the Latin class in the first hour after chapel to make his first recitation those members of the Fourth Form who had not yet had him pointed out to them bestowed on him glances of curiosity and interest such as those with which they might have surveyed a celebrity.

In the five minute recess at the end of the hour a big fellow, a member of the Fifth Form, came up to him and said, 'Noble, I'm Fred Warren, secretary of the Pythians, and Sam Reed told me to be sure and sign you up. He thinks you'll be pretty good in football.' He drew a notebook from his pocket and presented it together with his fountain pen to Henry for his signature.

'You want the full name of course?' said Henry.

'Of course,' said Warren laughing.

Henry inscribed himself at full length a Pythian and returned the notebook to Warren. 'Now what do I do?' he asked.

'That's all for the present. You'll be called out for football later.'

At lunch Sam Reed congratulated Henry on having joined the Pythians. Dan Dinsmore scoffed at him for his folly in not having joined the Corinthians.

'Have all the rest of you new kids joined one club or the other?' Sam Reed's glance roved from one to another of his table-companions, who all gave an affirmative reply except Earle Castleman.

'I don't know about Pythians and Corinthians,' Earle said timidly. 'What are they?'

'Every fellow belongs to one or the other,' said Reed. 'I should think you'd have found that out by this time!'

'If no one ever told him, how could he?' said Henry. Then he turned to Earle and explained, 'They're the two athletic clubs; they have first and second and third elevens and so on, and they play against each other.'

'What do I do to join?' asked Earle.

'If you want to join the Pythians, you hunt up a fellow in the Fifth Form named Warren and put your name in his book.'

'You don't want to join the Pythians, Castle-

man,' said Reed satirically. 'The Corinthians are the club for you.'

'They are not,' declared Dinsmore with equal emphasis. 'The Corinthians are the athletes, the Pythians are the weaklings. You join the Pythians, Castleman.'

Earle reddened with embarrassment while Danforth and Phillips laughed loudly.

'Pay no attention to either of them, Earle,' Henry counseled. 'If you decide to join the Pythians, I'll find Warren for you and tell him.'

'Thanks,' Earle murmured. 'Yes, I'd like to join.'

'Tough luck, old man,' said Dinsmore condolingly to Reed. 'Pass the butter, will you, Sam?'

Henry, seeing that Earle was again blushing furiously, was indignant; those fellows might have the decency to let the poor kid alone. His indignation and Dinsmore's last words together provoked him to a frank comment.

'Until I heard you Boston fellows talk, I never in my life heard any one say "pawss" and "glawss" and all that kind of thing. It sounds awfully affected. Is it natural, really?'

Reed and Dinsmore stared at him. Then Reed laughed and turned to Dinsmore. 'Dan,' he said, 'I think we'd better arrange to stay on

at this table. These new kids need to be educated.'

'They certainly do,' agreed Dinsmore. 'I never knew how awful the English language can be made to sound until I came here and heard some of these Westerners try to use it.'

Henry laughed good-naturedly. 'I suppose everybody seems queer to somebody else. Out in California I'd heard about the Boston accent, but you two are the first fellows to show me there really is such a thing.'

'I'd always heard that Californians are fresh,' retorted Reed, 'and now I know it.'

But whether Henry was fresh or not he had won the liking of Reed and Dinsmore as well as of the other fellows at the table. They respected him for his readiness always to come to the defense of Earle Castleman, even though they did not understand why he should constitute himself that poor creature's champion. They liked his willingness to stand up to them in any argument or controversy, and they enjoyed the verbal battles that they waged with him — mainly on the theme of the West against the East; the subject of controversy was the superiority of one region over the other, its advantages in climate, scenery, sports, cities, hotels, country clubs, roads, and especially the quality of its inhabitants. Before he had been in the School

three days Henry fully appreciated the significance of his father's talk with him about the difference in the point of view of people from different sections of the country. He thought that the Easterners had strange prejudices, and the Easterners evidently thought that he was a raw, crude sort of person. Even Sam Reed's favorite name for him — 'Nature's Nobleman' — flattering though it might be, conveyed just a shade of patronizing criticism.

But that there was one Easterner whose liking for the Californian was untouched by any sense of his superficial imperfections, Henry was soon uncomfortably aware. Earle Castleman's gratitude manifested itself in an embarrassing devotion. It was not that Earle made himself a bore by always tagging after him; in fact, he was so self-effacing that he usually slipped away when other fellows showed a desire for Henry's company. But his deference to Henry's opinion on any subject was too meek and his appreciation of the little attentions that his neighbor showed him from time to time too undisguised to cause Henry any satisfaction.

On the first Saturday evening of the term the fellows living on the first floor of the dormitory assembled in Mr. Libby's room to elect an inspector. Mr. Libby presided over the meeting and made a brief speech in which he pointed

out that the qualifications of a room inspector were fairmindedness, sense of responsibility, and freedom from prejudice and partisanship. He expressed the belief that whoever might be chosen would show himself worthy of the confidence placed in him, and he called for nominations. Dinsmore rose immediately and nominated Reed; Williams seconded the nomination. Then, after a short pause, Earle Castleman rose and said, 'I nominate Noble.' He blushed as he sat down, embarrassed by his temerity and by the surprised glances of most of the other new boys. Reed stood up at once and said, 'I second the nomination.'

'If there are no other nominations,' said Mr. Libby, after waiting for a few moments, 'the meeting will proceed now to vote by ballot on the two candidates. I will ask Danforth and Phillips to act as tellers.'

The two tellers distributed slips of paper and then collected and counted them.

'Eleven for Reed, three for Noble,' announced Danforth.

'Reed is elected inspector for this term,' said Mr. Libby, and the announcement was greeted with applause.

Henry had been touched by Earle's effort on his behalf and at the same time a little irritated by it. He had not wanted to be nominated;

the room inspector ought of course to be an old boy, one who knew the ropes. And furthermore he was aware of a somewhat unworthy feeling that to be placed in nomination for any office by Earle Castleman was a handicap rather than a help.

After the meeting had adjourned Henry walked down the corridor with Earle and stopped for a moment in the doorway of his room. 'Thanks for nominating me, Earle,' he said. 'It was a good thing though that Reed got it.'

For once Earle did not accept Henry's opinion with docility.

'I don't think so,' he said. 'I don't believe he'll be fair — the way you would be.'

'Of course he will. But it was good of you to put me up.'

He passed on into his own room, wondering why Earle seemed to be suspicious of every fellow but himself. Yet it was not so very long before he began to wonder if Earle had not some justification for his suspicious attitude. It was soon apparent that in one respect Earle had belittled his abilities unduly; for his studies he showed marked aptitude and by the end of the first week had won the favorable regard of all the masters to whom he recited. Dinsmore, who was no adept at Latin, formed the habit of

coming into Earle's room every morning before chapel and commanding him to translate the day's lesson. One morning Dinsmore entered with his book in his hand as usual, but instead of seating himself at the desk and calling on Earle to stand beside him and translate, he plumped himself down in the middle of the freshly made bed and bouncing up and down on it said, 'Hurry up, Castleman; get busy with the translation; no time to lose.'

'Get off my bed, please,' Earle said shrilly. 'You're mussing it up.'

'Who cares?' Dinsmore bounced more heavily than ever. 'Sit down beside me, Castleman, and never mind the bed.'

'You know I'll get a mark if it's mussed up.' Earle's voice quivered; Dinsmore thought he was near to sobbing in his dread of getting a mark, and therefore he bounced and grinned tauntingly. Then Reed, making his round of inspection, looked in at the door.

'Pretty messy bed you've got there, Castleman,' said Reed stiffly, with a wink at Dinsmore which Earle did not see.

'It's not my fault, it was all right till he came and spoiled it,' Earle protested.

'It's up to you to keep your room in order. We'll let it pass this time.' Reed proceeded on his rounds, and Dinsmore continued to sit on

the bed and demand that Castleman translate.

'I won't,' said Earle. 'Not till you get off my bed.'

'You will!' said Dinsmore, and springing up he seized Earle and dragged him down on the bed beside him. Then, holding him tight, he thrust his Latin book into his hands. Earle kept his lips compressed and pushed the book aside. Incensed by such unexpected, stubborn resistance, Dinsmore began to apply torture, twisting Earle's wrist with one hand and gripping his neck violently with the other.

'Quit it!' Earle shrieked in pain.

The cry reached the ears of Henry Noble, who had just entered the dormitory, returning to it late from breakfast. With eagerness for anything that might portend a fray, he ran down the corridor to Earle's room. Standing in the doorway he saw Dinsmore's face upturned to his, laughing, while Earle, still held in a remorseless grip, looked at him with eyes piteously appealing.

'Hi! What's the row?' Henry asked.

'The slob won't translate for me,' said Dinsmore cheerfully. 'But I guess he will under a little more pressure.'

Another squeeze of the neck and Earle writhed and cried 'Ow!'

'I'll translate for you,' said Henry. 'I'll translate you to your own room.'

The next instant Earle found himself released, while his room became the scene of a furious struggle in which he had no part. Henry and Dinsmore were pretty evenly matched in weight and strength; in their wrestling they banged into the bureau, overturned a chair, crashed against the door, and tumbled again upon the bed, and from the bed to the floor, where they were rolling about each in a desperate effort to get and keep the other down when Mr. Libby, attracted by the turmoil, made his entrance.

'Come, come!' said Mr. Libby. 'Break away there! Get up!'

The two combatants, panting, flushed, and disheveled, got slowly to their feet.

'You fellows know better than to make such disorder in dormitory,' said Mr. Libby. 'Clear out of Castleman's room, both of you. You can feel yourselves lucky that I don't choose to give you each a couple of demerits. Next time you won't get off so easy.'

'Can't I stay, Mr. Libby?' Dinsmore pleaded. 'I want to get a little help from Castleman on the Latin. He was just about to help me with it when Noble came in and interrupted us.'

At this shameless utterance, accompanied as it was by a graceless grin, Henry burst into a

laugh, while Earle, shocked by Dinsmore's audacious perversion of the facts, gazed wide-eyed at the impudent fabricator. Mr. Libby was not to be beguiled.

'No, get along with you.' He put his hand on Dinsmore's shoulder and gently pushed him towards the door. 'After this scuffle, Castleman has something else to do in his room than help you with your Latin.'

'He'd much rather help me — wouldn't you, Castleman?' Dinsmore persisted, with a backward glance.

'No!' said Earle explosively, and while Mr. Libby smiled, Dinsmore, looking back from the doorway, grimaced and shook his fist at Earle, half menacingly, half facetiously.

In the Latin class that day Dinsmore made a halting translation, so very incoherent that Mr. Woodruff, the teacher, asked him drily if he thought Cicero deliberately wrote nonsense.

'I suppose not, but I can't make anything out of it,' said Dinsmore with his usual cheerfulness.

'Of course you can't when you haven't tried and are just guessing at the meaning of the words,' said Mr. Woodruff, bending a severe gaze on Dinsmore; the shape and nature of his head and countenance had caused him to be nicknamed the Bald Eagle. 'Reed, translate.'

Reed made by no means a finished translation,

but he did at least succeed in bringing out in some degree the author's meaning, an achievement which evoked from the Bald Eagle the remark, 'Awkward enough, but you have a glimmering of the sense.' A few minutes later Earle was called on; he rendered the passage assigned to him into satisfactory English and received a word of commendation. After the hour Dinsmore accosted him in the corridor with an aggrieved look and in dignified speech.

'How easily you might have spared me that humiliation, Castleman! I should think you'd have remorse all right — when you had such an opportunity to help a fellow.'

'I should think you'd have remorse all right — when you never miss an opportunity to pester a fellow,' replied Earle unexpectedly.

'Why, you're talking right up! You're coming along!' exclaimed Dinsmore with apparent gratification. 'I may be able to make a regular fellow of you yet.'

He announced that praiseworthy purpose the next morning when he again entered Earle's room just after Earle had finished making his bed. 'And now,' he said, dropping plop into the middle of the bed, 'now that I'm going to help you to be a regular fellow, you're going to help me to get by with the Bald Eagle. Sit down here and go over the lesson with me.'

'You get off the bed!' cried Earle.

'Oh, don't be silly about your old bed; nobody's going to give you a demerit because it's mussed. Sit down and stop your crabbing.'

'I'm not going to run the chance of getting demerits,' said Earle. 'Get off the bed.'

'I'm not going to get off the bed,' retorted Dinsmore pugnaciously. 'Sit down now and translate.'

Henry Noble appeared quietly in the doorway. 'If you want to take me on at wrestling again, Dinsmore,' he said, 'I'm ready to go outside with you.'

'I'll take you on when I find it convenient,' Dinsmore replied. 'Just now I'm busy with Castleman; he's going to translate the Latin for me.'

'I wouldn't mind helping him if he'd sit anywhere but on my bed,' said Earle. 'But I'm not going to have him muss it all up and spoil my chance of having an extra day of vacation.'

'Oh, don't be so scared of things that won't happen,' said Dinsmore. 'Reed didn't give you a dust yesterday, did he, when your room was in a mess? Don't worry then about what he may do to you to-day. Sit down beside me and pretend you're a regular fellow.'

Earle hesitated, glanced at Henry who smiled

and nodded, urging him to comply, and then on a perverse and stubborn impulse exclaimed, 'No, I won't. Get off that bed if you want me to translate.'

By way of answer Dinsmore lay back on the bed, brought his feet up and rested his shoes on the bedspread, and reclined thus, looking at Earle with supreme contempt. And Henry, disappointed, withdrew to his own room.

Dinsmore remained sprawling on the bed until he heard Reed begin inspecting the rooms along the corridor. Then he rose lazily and was on the point of leaving when Reed looked in.

'Pretty messy bed in here,' Dinsmore remarked as he passed out.

'I'll say it is,' replied Reed. 'What's the matter, Castleman? I'll have to give you a dust if your room doesn't look better than this when I come round.'

'It looked all right till that friend of yours, Dinsmore, came in and messed it up,' fumed Earle. 'Tell him to keep out and you'll have no occasion to give me a dust.'

'You must learn to be hospitable,' said Reed chidingly, and passed on.

Earle remade his bed, raging inwardly. He had a passion for neatness and order; any rude disturbance of his arrangements and possessions was of itself offensive to him, even had no ques-

tion of demerits and his vacation privilege been involved. He felt now that he loathed Dinsmore from the bottom of his soul, and that Reed was hardly less odious. While he was in this angry state of mind he heard Henry Noble call to him from the corridor. 'You'd better hurry up, Earle. Time to go to chapel.'

Even more than the warning, the sound of Henry's retreating steps caused Earle to make haste. He wanted the comfort of a word with Henry — the only fellow in the School who had shown any sympathy or liking for him. So he flew up the corridor and out of the door and overtook Henry before he had gone very far along the boardwalk leading from the dormitory to the road.

'Hello,' said Henry and walked with him for a few moments in silence. Fellows from other dormitories came hurrying by, usually with the greeting, 'Hello, Noble,' or 'Hello, Henry,' as they passed. No one said, 'Hello, Earle,' in fact no one said even 'Hello, Castleman.'

'Why didn't you sit down beside Dinsmore when he wanted you to?' Henry asked abruptly.

'I wasn't going to sit down beside him after the way he treated me yesterday. I'd told him I wouldn't do anything for him till he got off my bed.'

'I think he was willing to be friendly really.'

'Willing to be! He'd better be — if he wants me to do his work for him!'

'I don't exactly blame you,' said Henry, 'but just the same I think you ought to act differently, Earle.'

'Why should I? He comes into my room just to make trouble for me — the big brute!'

'When you refuse to help him, he naturally takes it out of you.'

'The more I help him the more he takes it out of me. I helped him, and then he began mussing up my bed. I don't want dusts handed to me, and I told him I wouldn't help him if he didn't keep off my bed.'

'That was all right, but you see it doesn't work out. So you'd have done better not to be obstinate, and then he would probably have been more decent.'

'No, he wouldn't. He would just have mauled me if I'd sat down beside him. He simply loves to maul me.'

'You shouldn't mind it so much. Playing football, fellows are getting mauled all the time, but they don't think anything of it.'

'Well, I'm no football player. And the things he does to me — I guess they'd be called fouls in football anyway.'

'He doesn't mean any harm to you. Fellows

are rough with each other and it's just in fun. You must learn to get on with them; then you'll have a good time.'

'If they were all like you I might.'

'Oh shucks!' said Henry, embarrassed and touched. 'Just be friendly with fellows and you'll enjoy life.'

So easy for Henry to do, so impossible for himself, thought Earle enviously, as three or four of his classmates seized upon Henry at the entrance to the Study building, dragged him away talking eagerly about football, and left Earle to walk into chapel unaccompanied. He took his seat on one of the long oak benches running parallel with the aisle and gloomily watched the fellows as they trooped in, with a shuffle and click of rapid footsteps on the tiled floor, the big and the little, the homely and the handsome, the neat and the untidy; whether they slid into their seats or thumped down on the benches or took their places with quiet ease they all wore in Earle's jealous eyes an unfriendly aspect. Even the masters in their comfortable carved stalls against the walls, watching sharply to detect disorderly or indecorous conduct on the part of any youth, were all of them, Earle thought, severe rather than kind. To be sure, none of them had as yet treated him with severity, but Mr. Libby had frowned upon him

as well as on Dinsmore and Noble when he had quelled the disorder in his room, and no doubt it would not be long now before Mr. Libby would begin to persecute him.

IV

A CANDIDATE FOR THE SIXTH ELEVEN

On the afternoon of that very day it seemed to Earle that his foreboding in regard to Mr. Libby was fulfilled. Having nothing with which to occupy himself in his free time, he had walked down to the athletic grounds where the various Pythian and Corinthian elevens were practicing, and had moved from one field to another searching for the group of which Henry was a member. A lonely figure, he wandered about in the fringe of spectators, speaking to no one, miserably aware of his loneliness. No other fellow on that whole field seemed to be without a companion. At last he caught sight of Henry at left tackle on the second Pythian eleven, on which Reed was playing halfback; he moved back and forth along the sideline with each play, always trying to follow Henry with his eyes. The second eleven was pitted against the first and making a valiant struggle of it; Earle thrilled with delight when Henry burst through and tackled Corcoran, the big Sixth Form halfback, for a ten-yard loss. The play that thrilled Earle exasperated Mr. Benning, who was the coach of the first eleven.

'What's the matter there at right guard and right tackle?' he shouted. 'That's the second time you've let Noble get through you and smear the runner. Brace up now!'

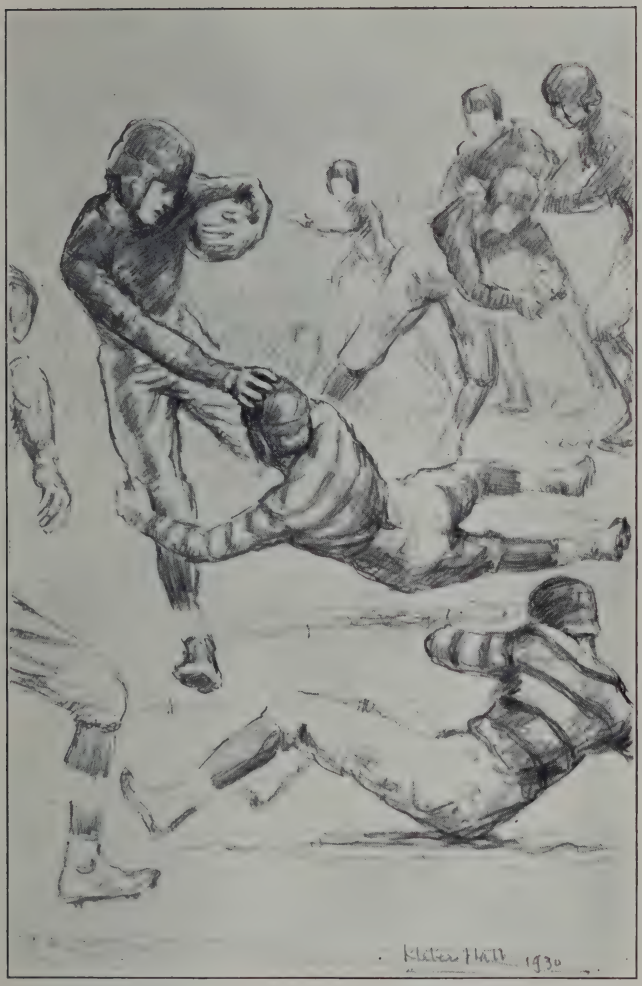
In his satisfaction at finding that Henry was distinguishing himself, Earle's face brightened; he kept his eyes on Henry with absorbed attention. The first eleven directed its next two or three plays against the right side of the opposing line and made long gains. Then Corcoran made a plunge at center; the second eleven stopped him and Earle was again delighted to see that it was Henry who had pulled him down.

Then he was aware that some one had come up and was standing beside him. He turned and saw Mr. Libby. In a burst of enthusiasm quite unusual he exclaimed, 'Oh, Mr. Libby, Henry Noble's playing a wonderful game against the first!'

'Is he?' said Mr. Libby. 'That's good.' Earle with a certain uncanny instinct felt that Mr. Libby was looking at him in a speculative and not very sympathetic manner, and at once his enthusiasm was chilled.

'Castleman,' said Mr. Libby, 'why don't you go out for football? I think it would be a good thing for you.'

'I don't like to play,' said Earle. 'I'm no good at it.'



HENRY BURST THROUGH AND TACKLED CORCORAN

'You could play with boys of your own weight and strength,' said Mr. Libby. 'Playing on a fifth or sixth team you wouldn't feel you were outclassed. It would be a good thing for you.'

'I hate getting knocked around,' said Earle frankly. 'I don't think there's any fun in it. Other fellows seem to like it; I don't.'

'Getting knocked around a little is apt to do a fellow a lot of good. And once you got into football you might find you liked it.'

Earle shook his head. 'I know I shouldn't. And I should never be any good at it. What's the use of playing a game that you don't like and could never be good at?'

'You might find there were advantages. It might help you to get on better with other fellows.'

'I could get on all right with them if they'd let me alone.'

'I think you make a mistake,' said Mr. Libby.

He moved on, leaving Earle disturbed and resentful. Why should a master take it on himself to try to coerce a fellow into playing football? Mr. Libby had shown his disapproval clearly; now he would be continually picking on him. He remained for a time watching the practice game; he was able in spite of the depressed state of mind into which Mr. Libby's recommendation had thrown him to feel keenly

satisfied when Henry Noble was transferred from the second eleven to the first. Playing football would be fun of course for a fellow who had Henry's strength and quickness. But what fun could a fellow who was both weak and clumsy get out of it! And why should Mr. Libby think that the fellows would like him better merely if he tried to play a game that he didn't like and could never do well in? He admitted to himself that the chief reason that he did not want to play football was his dread of getting hurt. Did Mr. Libby mean that the other boys despised him because they suspected him of being a coward? Was a fellow really a coward who was physically not strong and who shrank from playing a rough game with huskier fellows? Mr. Libby had pointed out that there were elevens made up of fellows no stronger than himself; well, out of curiosity he might look at them for a few moments.

At the farther end of the athletic grounds the fifth and sixth teams of the Pythians and Corinthians were having their practice scrimmage. They showed as much spirit and determination as did their seniors; a little observation of their struggles merely strengthened Earle's belief that a light fellow playing with others of his own weight was just as likely to get hurt as was a heavy fellow playing with heavy fellows. Most

of the members of the sixth elevens were younger than himself, Third Formers chiefly — though there was Pryor of the Fourth, spindle-shanked and ungainly, and fat little Corbett, also of the Fourth; really, if fellows like those could play, almost any one might! But surely they would be badly hurt before the season ended, Pryor was so brittle-looking and Corbett so awkward. He watched those two with a certain fascination, expecting to see one if not both of them lie groaning on the ground after each scrimmage. But when at last Mr. Worden, the master who was coaching, told the boys that they had practiced enough for that day, Pryor and Corbett walked off the field quite uninjured. And then, with a sudden determination which he did not allow to cool, Earle went up to Mr. Worden.

'If it isn't too late,' he said, 'I should like to come out and try for one of the elevens.'

'All right,' Mr. Worden answered with a smile. 'Be here in your football clothes tomorrow at three.'

'I have no football clothes.'

'They'll fit you out at the School store. I shouldn't be surprised if we made an end of you,' said Mr. Worden encouragingly.

'I shouldn't be surprised if it was the end of me,' said Earle, with a flash of melancholy liveliness.

He purchased his football equipment and stowed it in his closet without confiding to Henry Noble or any one else the rash step that he had taken. That evening at supper there was much talk about Henry's promotion to the first eleven; Earle feared that the next evening there would be just as much talk accompanied by derision about his going out to try for the sixth. Reed, who was on the second Pythian eleven and had no prospects of promotion, was frankly jealous and could not disguise the fact, even while giving Henry his congratulations. Dinsmore, who played on the first Corinthian eleven, professed to be delighted that he would now have a chance to 'smear' Henry in action, and Henry retorted that the chief reason why he had wanted to make the first was in order to have a good crack or two at Dinsmore.

The next morning after breakfast Dinsmore entered Earle's room and dropped heavily on the bed. 'Translate, Castleman,' he commanded, opening his Latin book.

'I'll never help you with another lesson so long as you come in and muss up my bed,' said Earle flushing.

'Oh, I think you will,' said Dinsmore. 'You'll never have a decent-looking bed until you learn to behave decently.' He bounced up and down for a while and then said, 'Going to translate?'

'No.'

Dinsmore rose and with quiet deliberation proceeded to strip off the bedclothes and toss them on the floor. Then he walked out of the room. Earle, white with anger, picked up the sheets and blankets and flung them on the bed, leaving it in disorder. Then he printed in large letters on a sheet of paper, 'This Mess Was Made By Dinsmore,' placed the sheet conspicuously on the pile of bedclothes, and left the room.

He did not have an opportunity before chapel to tell Henry Noble of his troubles; and after chapel he saw Henry walking back to the dormitory with Reed and Dinsmore. So he followed at a distance. On entering the building he glanced at the bulletin board and flushed at seeing his name posted — 'Castleman, one dust.' The only fellow on the floor to be posted!

He found his bed in the same condition as it had been in when he left his room, except that the placard which he had placed on it had been removed. Chafing at the injustice of which he was the victim, he remade his bed, and then settled down to study. But his mind was seething with indignation; he could not concentrate his attention on his books. He could not even dwell with anxiety on the ordeal of football upon which he was to enter in the afternoon, beyond

taking a momentary morbid pleasure in the thought that if he should receive some fatal injury both Reed and Dinsmore would probably be harrowed by remorse. Nor was he able to devise any scheme of retaliation. But a determination not to endure such injustice in silence took possession of him and hardened in his mind. Nothing that had ever before happened to him had given him an impulse to assert himself as this outrage committed against him by Dinsmore and aggravated by Reed's action had done.

At lunch he seized the attention of all the fellows at the table and of Mr. Libby also when he said in a loud voice in which there was a quiver of excitement, 'Reed, when you gave me that dust to-day, had you seen the notice I left on my bed?'

'Yes,' said Reed, lifting his eyebrows and speaking languidly. 'I saw it. What of it?'

'Didn't you believe the statement?' Earle was so angry, so much in earnest, and so unlike himself as he had hitherto appeared that the others at the table looked and listened intently.

Reed showed annoyance at the questioning. He shrugged his shoulders and said, 'You left your bed in disorder; that's all that interested me.'

'You're not fit to be an inspector.' Earle's face was flaming. 'You don't know what it is

to be fair and decent. You ought to be hauled up before the supervisor.'

'You'll ruin your digestion if you get so excited,' said Reed calmly. 'If you have any complaint to make, you'd better come to me quietly after lunch.'

'Didn't you know that Dinsmore tore my bed to pieces because I wouldn't do the Latin for him while he sat on it?' demanded Earle hotly.

'How should I know what he did or why he did it? I wasn't there, was I?'

'Go on, Earle, you're all right,' said Henry with enthusiasm. 'I like to see you sticking up for yourself.'

But Mr. Libby intervened. 'In one respect at least Reed is right,' he said. 'Wrangling shouldn't be carried on at the table. After lunch he'll have to give you a hearing, Castleman.'

The unconcern with which Reed and Dinsmore viewed the incident and with which they dismissed Earle completely from their attention did not tend to reduce his wrath. He followed them out of the dining-room after lunch; Henry was beside him, and the other fellows who sat at the table with him and who had been keenly interested in the incipient quarrel gathered round when Earle joined Reed and Dinsmore outside the building.

'I want to know,' said Earle, 'if you're going to take back that dust you gave me.'

'Why should I?' said Reed.

'I had made my bed properly. Your friend Dinsmore messed it up. I had no time before chapel to fix it again.'

'That's all right; you deserved a dust for acting as you did — getting a fellow so irritated that he felt he just had to mess up your room.'

Reed grinned with satisfaction at the ingenuity of this explanation, and Dinsmore laughed and said, 'You see, Castleman, Reed's doing what he can to teach you to behave like a human being.'

Most of the fellows in the group of those listening joined in the laughter at Earle's expense. Henry did not.

'What was it you did, Earle, to get Dinsmore so irritated that he just had to mess up your room?' Henry asked.

'He was already messing it up — bouncing round on the bed I'd just made. Ordering me to translate the Latin to him. I told him I would never translate it to him so long as he kept coming in and mussing up my bed.'

'That was an unneighborly way to behave, Castleman,' said Reed chidingly.

'I want to know if you're going to take off that dust,' said Earle.

'I don't know any particular reason why I should.'

'Oh,' yes, you do,' struck in Henry. 'You know it was perfectly unfair.'

'Look here, Henry,' said Reed, irritated, 'you don't need to butt in always when we're dealing with Castleman.'

'Deal with him fairly, then. If Dinsmore messes up his room it's Dinsmore that ought to have the dust.'

'Go on!' said Dinsmore. 'What do you new kids think you can do? Run the dormitory?'

'We can see, anyway, that it's run fairly,' replied Henry. 'There's no sportsmanship in the way you're behaving.'

'You can't teach us anything about sportsmanship,' said Reed, with warmth.

'Well, are you going to take off that dust?' demanded Earle again.

'I don't see any reason to.'

'All right. I'll see the supervisor about it.'

'Wait a moment, Earle,' said Henry. 'You let me talk with the supervisor. It will have more effect.'

He took Earle by the arm and walked on with him. Reed and Dinsmore and the others followed. They all proceeded in silence to the dormitory; then as Earle and Henry were enter-

ing Reed called, 'You needn't see the supervisor, Henry; I'll take off the dust.'

Henry and Earle stopped beside the bulletin board and watched Reed, his face flushed, tear down the notice that he had posted that morning and crumple it in his hand.

'Now we're all set,' said Henry cheerfully. 'I guess you won't have to worry about any more dusts, Earle.'

He went into his room and began to dress for football practice, quite unaware that in the next room Earle with trembling and unaccustomed fingers was setting about similar preparations.

V

CALIFORNIA STUFF

EARLE did not emerge from his room until after the sound of voices and of clumping shoes in the corridor had ceased and he was sure that all the other football players were already on their way to the athletic field. Then, timidly, reluctantly he ventured forth. In his unfamiliar garments he felt strange and unnatural, and he derived no confidence from the feeling. His stiff trousers with their legs rubbing audibly against each other as he walked, his tight-fitting jersey with the clumsy protuberances on shoulders and elbows, his heavy cleated shoes seemed an equipment designed to accentuate his natural awkwardness.

When he stepped outdoors into the chill autumnal air, his heart was beating hard and his legs were tremulous. But as he walked along the path through the bit of woods that led to the athletic field, he became more calm — resigned, as it were, to his fate. Two older fellows in football clothes, a little late for practice, ran past him and seemed not to notice anything unusual in his appearance; at any rate they made no comment as they ran nor did they look back at

him with derision on their faces. Perhaps he would feel better if he ran, as they were doing. So he trotted at a gentle pace through the woods and came out on the edge of the playing fields.

The scrimmage practice had not yet begun; the candidates for the first Pythian team were passing a football from one to another as Earle walked by. Henry Noble, swinging round after shooting a long pass straight into Captain Mercer's hands, caught sight of him, and rushed towards him, shouting, 'Good boy, Earle!' He clapped Earle on the back and walked with him for a few paces, saying, 'Fine for you! Be a ball of fire!'

During the intervals in the practice of the first Pythian eleven, Henry glanced often towards the field where the fifth and sixth elevens were being drilled by Mr. Worden; but he was unable to distinguish Earle among the players. But when the practice was over, he and Sam Reed overtook Earle limping on his way back to the dormitory.

'Hello, Castleman,' Reed exclaimed in astonishment. 'What you been up to?'

'Trying to play football,' Earle replied.

'How do you like it?'

'I hate it.'

'Going to stick it out?'

'I don't know. I stuck it out for this afternoon anyway.'

'Of course you're going to stick it out,' said Henry. 'You're going to be good at it some day.'

'Make any tackles?' asked Reed.

'I helped to make two,' said Earle.

'To-morrow you'll make a dozen,' said Henry.

He and Reed walked briskly on, leaving Earle to make his limping way alone. Other fellows from the football field passed him and spoke to him with surprised interest. He was conscious of a certain pride in having gone successfully through an afternoon of football practice, and he did not limp much more noticeably than he had to on account of the wrench that had been given to his knee. After he had taken a bath and put on clean clothes he felt unusually serene. Probably he would go through the football season without suffering any more serious mishaps or injuries than he had already experienced. But why should he continue to play a game that he detested? It was true that he rather enjoyed the feeling that he had just now, but it wasn't very sensible to play a game that one hated merely for the sake of the sensation that followed. Or was that the real value of playing any game? He felt confused as he tried to decide what course he had better follow. Was he cow-

ardly because he had been and still was afraid to play football, or was he cowardly because he played it under pressure of public opinion? Whether he played or didn't play, his conduct neither gained nor lost in merit, so far as he could see. And yet winning the approval of others seemed to strengthen his self-respect. His intellect rebelled at the acceptance of the standards that determined the esteem in which a fellow was held; nevertheless his heart was lighter now that he seemed to have risen somewhat in public esteem.

At supper Dinsmore complimented him ironically, and said he had heard that the fellows on the sixth Corinthian eleven were scared almost to death on account of the great strength that had unexpectedly been added to their opponents. Mr. Libby smiled and glanced at Earle reassuringly; and after supper found an opportunity to take him by the arm and say that he was delighted to learn that his suggestion had been adopted and that he was sure Earle would enjoy life at St. Timothy's ever so much more now. Again Earle thought it was a strange little world in which a fellow was expected to enjoy life the more for playing a game that he didn't enjoy at all.

The question was one over which he did not long have to ponder. On his third afternoon of

football practice, while trying to break through interference and make a tackle, he was bowled over; as he went down some one fell heavily on his ankle, wrenching it and causing instant and intense pain. When he got up he could not rest his weight on the injured foot; Mr. Worden helped him from the field and lifted him into an automobile, in which he was immediately transported to the Infirmary. There the doctor found that his ankle was badly sprained and informed him that there would be no more football for him that year. For a week he went about on crutches and for some time after that with a cane; he was free now from molestation; both Reed and Dinsmore had shown sympathy and told him it was tough luck that he should have got hurt; Mr. Worden and Pryor and Corbett had all spoken handsomely of the courage that he had shown on the field; and Mr. Libby complimented him on his spirit.

'They tell me you tried hard to get your man on the play that knocked you out,' said Mr. Libby. 'Even if your football season this year has been short, I'm sure it's been worth while.'

Earle had an impulse to argue with Mr. Libby on that point, but refrained, thinking that if he did he might sacrifice something of the good opinion that he had so mysteriously won.

At any rate he could now stand on the sidelines without subjecting himself to criticism and inviting unwelcome suggestions. And having nothing more interesting to do in his play time, he usually hobbled to the football field and looked on at the practice of the two first elevens — especially the Pythian first eleven, on which Henry was playing left tackle. Dinsmore was right tackle on the first Corinthian team. Earle looked forward with considerable interest to the contest that would take place between those two when the elevens met. He was confident that Henry would open up large holes through Dinsmore.

One afternoon, while he was observing the Pythians at their practice, some members of the Corinthian eleven, who had finished for the day, came from their part of the field and stopped near him to look on also. Among them were Dinsmore and John Benton, who was captain of the Corinthian eleven. These two took their stand directly in front of Earle without noticing him.

'That fellow Noble is good,' remarked Benton after a few moments. 'You'll have your hands full with him, Dan.'

'I should die of grief if I let that new kid put it over me,' replied Dinsmore boastfully.

'If he does, a fat chance you'll have of making

tackle on the School eleven. He'll get the place, not you.'

'Don't make up your mind now that I can't handle him,' said Dinsmore with some irritation. 'I promise you I will.'

'You sit at the same table with him, don't you? Why don't you and the other Corinthians at the table keep pushing cake and doughnuts and hot muffins at him? Bust up his digestion. That would help.'

'A good idea,' said Dinsmore. 'Get him talking and stirred up and then keep slipping him things so that he'll hardly notice what he's eating — I get you, Jack. Some idea!'

Before supper Earle went into Henry's room and acquainted him with the dastardly plot that had been framed to weaken his digestion. Henry was highly amused.

'They must think I'm a nitwit!' he remarked. 'So long as they don't put poison in the milk I guess I'll get by with my digestion.'

For three consecutive meals Henry waved aside the hot bread, pastry, and cake that the attentive Corinthians at the table tried to press upon him, and always with the remark, 'No, thanks; pawss it on to Dinsmore. I'd just as soon have some if Dinsmore will, too — hawf and hawf.'

On the third repetition of this speech Dins-

more, who had before affected not to hear it, said sharply, 'It makes no difference to me what you eat.' And then, because he had been irritated both by the Californian's burlesque mimicking of his speech and by the failure of a plot that now appeared puerile as well as unsportsmanlike, he added insolently, 'All that matters to me is how you eat — and there's plenty of room for improvement.'

Henry flushed; he was aware that his table manners were sometimes careless; they had often drawn upon him half-humorous, half-impatient correction from his mother. Now it was upon his upbringing at home that Dinsmore's criticism seemed to reflect. He made no reply to the taunt, but he determined that he would never give Dinsmore occasion to repeat it, and also that he would not forget it when he confronted Dinsmore on the football field.

They faced each other the next afternoon in the first of the series of three games between the Pythian and Corinthian first elevens. Rain had fallen during the night; on the wet turf the backs had difficulty in keeping their feet and the linesmen slipped and floundered. The first half produced no action to stir the spectators to great enthusiasm; neither side scored; the forward passes that were attempted by both teams failed; there were no long runs round the end; in short

there was nothing to reconcile the partisans of either team to the discomfort of cold, wet feet from which they all — being universally scornful of rubbers — suffered. Earle Castleman, hopping about in an effort to warm his toes, was disappointed because Henry Noble failed to crash through Dinsmore for frequent spectacular tackles. Henry was disappointed, too; in spite of his special reasons for wishing to take and keep the upper hand over his opponent, he was waging only an even battle against him.

But in the second half Dinsmore began to tire, and with the first elated perception of the fact Henry applied sterner pressure. Now the Pythians attacked the Corinthian right wing effectively; although the slippery ground forbade long end runs, line plunges between tackle and guard forced the Corinthians to retreat three, four, five yards at a time. Twice the stalwart defense work of the Corinthian backs arrested the hostile march, and long punts compelled the Pythians to resume it from some distance down the field, but resume it confidently they did, forcing the fighting all the way. When the last period of the game began they had the ball on first down on the Corinthians' twenty-five yard line. Their quarterback called the signal for Henry Noble to open a hole at his left for Gordon, the left halfback; the ball was put in play

and Henry charging forward with head and shoulders down, thrust his right leg in between Dinsmore's legs. Dinsmore struggled to get by him and seize the runner; Henry, striving to prevent it, slipped in the mud and fell forward so that his right arm for a moment swung down against the outside of Dinsmore's right knee. Henry drew it up instantly, and Dinsmore twisted away and rushed past him — too late to make the tackle. Gordon plunged through the hole that Henry had opened up, and by a brilliant run scored a touchdown.

While the Pythian spectators were shouting and capering about in their joy and the Pythian players, slapping one another on the back in happy excitement, lined up for the try for goal, Dinsmore showing no less excitement, talked with Benton, the Corinthian captain; then the two went to the umpire, Mr. Chalmers, and talked to him earnestly. Mr. Chalmers shook his head; Dinsmore crouched and illustrated against Benton the manner in which he had been kept out of the play. Pressing with his right arm he locked Benton's leg with his elbow against his own leg.

Mr. Chalmers shrugged his shoulders at first; then, unwilling to dismiss the charge without giving those who made it a further hearing, he called the referee and the linesman, Mr. Keep

and Mr. Worden, into the conference. The Pythians now realized that their touchdown was disputed; Mercer, their captain, ran up to enter into the argument. Henry looked on, with growing and indignant comprehension. When Dinsmore again gave a demonstration of the illegal action that he charged, Henry resisted the impulse to run forward and show just what had happened. He stood still, knowing that the umpire would question him if necessary.

But no question was put to him. Neither Mr. Keep nor Mr. Worden accepted Dinsmore's contention; the umpire allowed the touchdown, and the Pythian spectators whose rejoicing had been hushed temporarily in apprehension raised a triumphant shout. Earle Castleman balanced himself on one crutch and waved the other aloft while he lifted his voice in jubilation. Mercer kicked the goal, and there was more shouting from the Pythians.

On the first line-up after the kick-off Henry realized that Dinsmore was facing him in an angry mood.

'You know you held me,' Dinsmore said.

'I know I didn't,' Henry retorted.

Anger may have caused Dinsmore to play harder, but it enabled him to play no better than before. The game ended with the Pythians victorious by a score of 7 to 0. But all the mem-

bers of the Corinthian eleven, incited by Dinsmore, believed that if Mr. Chalmers had seen what really happened in the critical moment of the game he would not have allowed the Pythians' touchdown, and that the game would have been a tie. Dinsmore assured all his teammates and many others that if Henry Noble had not held him, illegally, he would have tackled Bob Gordon before he had made a yard — let alone a touchdown! He asserted this so strenuously to Sam Reed, who as a Pythian had scoffed at the Corinthians' claim, that Reed was somewhat shaken in his conviction and wondered if perhaps Henry, in spite of his attractive ways, might not be a bit tricky. He suggested to Dinsmore that even if Henry had been guilty of holding, it was a violation of the rules that often occurred and that there was no need to think the worse of a fellow who had once indulged in it.

'He can't bring that kind of stuff here from California and get away with it,' said Dinsmore virtuously.

'I guess you're sore just because he opened up that hole through you,' said Reed.

'All right — if you think I'm as poor a sport as that!'

Dinsmore's resentment was so intense that Reed, who cared more for his friendship than

for that of any one else in the School, made haste to mollify him.

'No, of course I don't think you're a poor sport. Only you may be mistaken; Mr. Chalmers and Mr. Keep and all the fellows on the Pythian team think you are.'

'I'm the one who was held. I know.'

Against a conviction so stubbornly clung to no argument availed. Reed went to Henry and asked him if there was any ground for Dinsmore's belief.

'Only this,' said Henry. 'I slipped in the mud and by accident brought my arm down against his leg for just a second. — Here, I'll show you.'

The illustration that he gave convinced Reed that only by interpreting the rule against holding in the narrowest, most technical sense could the umpire have sustained Dinsmore's contention. He tried later when he was alone with Dinsmore to make him see this. But Dinsmore remained obstinate.

'I know how he kept me out of the play,' he insisted. 'No matter what he tells you. I know.'

Dinsmore's manner towards Henry, which from the first day of their acquaintance had been friendly, was now distinctly cool. Henry affected not to notice any change in it.

On the day when the second game in the

Pythian-Corinthian series was to be played the boys were finishing lunch when Dinsmore, looking across at Henry with challenging eyes, said, 'Don't try to pull any of your California stuff on us this afternoon.'

'I don't know what you mean,' Henry answered calmly. 'But I guess you weren't spanked enough when you were young.'

The retort delighted Reed and all of the other Pythians at the table. In the midst of the laughter the Corinthians present felt it necessary to pull long faces.

'I'm warning you,' said Dinsmore. 'No more California stuff. You can't get away with it a second time.'

'Well,' said Henry with a grin, 'I expect we'll go through you for a touchdown a second time.'

'No more California stuff,' repeated Dinsmore, nettled by the sympathetic laughter which had greeted Henry's sally.

Good-tempered though Henry had appeared, he had preserved his equanimity only by severe self-control. Walking with Earle Castleman from the dining-hall to his room, where he was to dress for the game, he did not disguise his feelings.

'Earle,' he said, 'if I don't do to Dinsmore what I promised, I want you to whale me with your cane.'

'You'll show him up,' said Earle confidently. 'The ground's dry to-day; you'll have a better chance.'

Certainly after that game there was no reason for Henry to go to Earle and demand punishment. The Pythians won by a score of 14 to 0; they made both their touchdowns on line plunges through Dinsmore, and throughout the game Henry was the outstanding player in the Pythian line, in both attack and defense. Before the game had ended, every one on the field, spectators and players alike, had conceded him the place on the School eleven that Dinsmore had coveted; Mercer, the other tackle on the Pythian team, and captain of the School eleven, was admittedly Dinsmore's superior. Recognition of the fact that he had been outplayed and could not win this year the position on the School eleven to which he had aspired rankled in Dinsmore's breast; he was crestfallen and sour when he appeared at supper that evening.

His friend Sam Reed offered him his sympathy in a somewhat exultant manner: 'You played well, old man, but that California stuff was too much for you.'

'Oh, dry up!' Dinsmore said rudely.

The others at the table respected his feelings; Henry made no taunting remarks. But Dins-

more's disappointment had been so bitter that he could not show a cordial and friendly spirit towards the person who had intervened between him and the attainment of a cherished ambition. He could not decline the call to come out as a member of the second eleven that was to give the newly organized School eleven practice; he could not resign even when he found it was his unhappy lot to be opposed to Henry and to receive daily a further demonstration of Henry's superior football ability. The feeling that he was condemned to play an ignoble part galled him; the belief that Henry secretly and silently rejoiced in the power to humiliate him embittered his days. And he clung tenaciously to the opinion that Henry was not above resorting to unfair methods when he could not achieve results otherwise.

Jealousy of Henry's success in football was accompanied by jealousy of Henry's friendship with Sam Reed. Dinsmore had been accustomed to regard himself as Sam's closest friend; the fact that they were members of rival athletic clubs had never affected their intimacy. But nowadays Henry was often in Sam's room and Sam was often in Henry's; moreover, Sam as a Pythian was clearly not disposed to be sympathetic with Dinsmore's grievances as a Corinthian and as a defeated aspirant for highest foot-

ball honors. As Dinsmore was not without other friends who were sympathetic and who, as Corinthians, accepted readily enough his opinion that Henry, though a powerful football player, was deficient in sportsmanship, he turned to them in these days for companionship; but he was painfully conscious nevertheless of a yearning for the revival of the intimacy with Sam that had been the happiest feature of his life at St. Timothy's, and of sharp dislike of the fellow who seemed to have thrust him aside in Sam's affection as effectively as he had thrust him aside on the football field.

Walking out of the dining-hall one day behind Sam and Henry, who were laughing and talking together, Dinsmore fell in with Earle. In his surprise at being joined by one whom he regarded as an enemy, Earle's suspicions were aroused; what was Dinsmore going to do to him now?

'I guess your friend's pretty nearly through with you, Castleman,' said Dinsmore, as he and Earle walked together a few paces behind Henry and Sam on their way to their dormitory.

'What do you mean?' Earle asked.

'Look at him and Sam Reed. He's always sucking up to Reed. You don't count for anything with him any more.'

'I guess,' said Earle, 'I count for as much with him as you do with Reed.'

Dinsmore's face darkened and he seized Earle's wrist and gave it a cautionary wrench. 'Don't be fresh,' he said. 'I'm speaking of you and your California friend.'

'What of it?' said Earle.

'I'm just giving you something to think about,' said Dinsmore.

'Thanks. I have better things to think about.'

'Such as?'

'How little you count with Reed.'

This time the wrench that Dinsmore gave the wrist was something more than cautionary. Earle squirmed and kicked Dinsmore in the shins. At the sound of the scuffle Reed and Henry turned.

'Let him alone!' Henry commanded in a threatening tone.

'What are you always picking on the kid for?' asked Reed in a tone of disgust.

Earle's glance of understanding and triumph enraged Dinsmore as much as did the command and the rebuke. He relinquished his hold on his victim and quickening his steps joined Reed and Henry.

'You don't either of you need to butt in when I'm fooling with Castleman,' he said, walking beside Reed.

'Don't fool with him and we won't butt in,' said Henry.

'The kid needs to learn to take care of himself. He'll never grow up if he feels he has a bodyguard looking after him all the time.'

Dinsmore addressed these words in a more reasonable tone to Reed.

'What fun do you get out of pestering him?' Reed asked. 'That's just as kiddish as it is to mind being pestered.'

'You talk as if you'd never had any fun with a kid!' said Dinsmore sarcastically.

'Nearly every one does, some time or other, but that's no excuse for always picking on a fellow.'

Dinsmore made no answer, and the three continued in silence until they entered the dormitory. Then after Henry had gone into his room, Dinsmore, accompanying Reed down the corridor, said, 'Sam, I think you've gone back on me.'

'In what way? Come in if you want to.'

Reed held the door of his room open for Dinsmore to enter. Then he stepped inside and closed the door.

'What's the matter with you anyway?'

He seated himself on his desk and looked up at his friend's sullen face, while Dinsmore stood with his hands in his pockets and his back against the door.

'Bawling me out, just when I was fooling with the kid — it's humiliating,' said Dinsmore. 'I don't think you'd have done it if you hadn't — well, if you hadn't gone back on me.'

'Oh, bunk! A fellow can bawl his friend out and still be his friend, can't he?'

'I suppose so — sometimes. But your joining in with Noble to do it — that's what I hate.'

'Why do you hate him so? You began by liking him.'

'He's too pleased with himself. And I think he's especially pleased with himself because he feels he's more or less got you away from me.'

'You're crazy,' said Reed.

'Well, isn't it a fact that you'd rather be with him now than with me?' demanded Dinsmore.

'I'd like to be with both of you and I'd get sick of it if I saw too much of either of you,' said Reed with a grin. 'Don't be silly, Dan. You're the oldest friend I've got; do you think anything's going to change that?'

'Well,' said Dinsmore, his face brightening and at the same time becoming somewhat sheepish, 'then I'll tell you something. I've just had a letter from Mother; the day after Christmas we're going to our place in Maine for a week or ten days and she wants me to get up a house party — it's a great place for winter sports, wonderful coasting and skiing and skating; and

I'd like to sign you up for it if you think you'd care to come.'

'I certainly would, old top! You weren't thinking of leaving me out, were you?'

'Not really. I'm glad you'll do it; we'll have a great time. It's a big house — room for eight or ten of us.'

'What other fellows are you going to ask?'

'I don't know yet. Fred Slocum, I think — but nobody else from up here. Six fellows and four girls, Mother suggests — I'd just as soon make it ten fellows and no girls.'

'Yes, you would! — Say, Dan, get your mother to ask Lucy Dunbar, will you?'

'I'd thought of her, and of Jane Mason,' said Dinsmore somewhat self-consciously.

'Sure, I knew you'd ask Jane Mason. But don't forget Lucy. You're a good egg, Dan; it will be some party.'

'We'll see that it is.'

Dinsmore withdrew to his room, satisfied that if his influence with Sam had been on the point of slipping away from him he had now regained a firm grasp of it.

The game between St. Timothy's and St. John's was marked by an incident that offered him an opportunity to test his influence. It was played in a drizzle of rain on a wet and slippery field, and as an exhibition of football it was dull

and disappointing. Both teams slid and floundered, forward passes went astray, kicks were poorly executed on account of the uncertain footing. St. John's scored a touchdown in the first half after the St. Timothy's back, who had intended to punt, fumbled the ball on his ten-yard line and a St. John's player fell on it. St. John's failed to kick the goal. After that the two teams played on even terms until the last period, when, driven by desperation, St. Timothy's pushed St. John's down the field by line rushes for forty yards without losing the ball. Then with the ball on St. John's twenty-yard line occurred the play that disheartened the home team and spectators and set Dinsmore to talking. Henry Noble, who had been having a hard contest with the St. John's left tackle, heard the signal called that required him to open a hole to his opponent's right. He charged low and hard, slipped, and, as in the play that had roused Dinsmore's indignation, involuntarily locked his right arm for an appreciable moment against the right leg of the St. John's tackle. The umpire saw the play, and marched St. Timothy's back fifteen yards to the St. John's thirty-five yard line. Others besides the umpire, among them Dinsmore, had seen it too, and from the St. Timothy's spectators rose a groan of disgust if not of execration for the per-

petrator of so costly an error. St. Timothy's had lost their chance to score; they had to kick from mid-field, and a few moments later the game was over, with St. John's the winner by a 6 to 0 score and St. Timothy's drearily telling one another what would certainly have happened if it hadn't been for that penalty.

Crestfallen and disconsolate, Henry walked to the Athletic house. Three or four other members of the team walked with him, all gloomily silent. Through the St. Timothy's spectators, who were moving slowly away from the field, they passed, heads down, and were accorded a silent, mournful sympathy. But Henry felt that the silence and the mournfulness were charged with reproach, of which he was the deserving object. He was the culprit who had lost the game for St. Timothy's; if it hadn't been for his clumsiness the team would have rushed on to a touchdown. The disappointment of his fellow players was so bitter that they did not any of them speak to him in the dressing-room while they were stripping off their football clothes. Only Mercer, the captain, said when he found Henry standing next to him in the shower room, 'What was the trouble, Henry?'

'I slipped,' Henry said dejectedly. 'Trying to block him. And my arm pinned him accidentally for a moment.'

Fred Slocum, one of the Corinthian members of the team and a friend of Dinsmore's, overheard the question and the reply. He had entirely accepted Dinsmore's view of the earlier incident, and now he remarked sarcastically. 'Just what happened in your first game against the Corinthians, wasn't it?'

'Yes,' said Henry. 'Just exactly.'

Slocum made no comment, and Mercer said nothing. In their silence there was, Henry felt, doubt if not actual disbelief of his truthfulness. He was miserably unhappy. It was bad enough to know that he had lost the game, but to have his team-mates think he was crooked ——!

No one spoke to him in the dressing-room while he was putting on his clothes. Slocum, who had come out from the showers ahead of him, had passed the word round contemptuously that Noble said his holding had been due to just the same kind of an accident as had caused it in the Pythian-Corinthian game. Even the Pythian members of the team agreed that the explanation was too thin.

Henry left the building unaccompanied. Outside, in the darkness and the rain, which was now falling heavily, he found Earle Castleman waiting for him.

'Hello, Earle,' Henry said, trying to speak cheerfully. 'What are you doing out here?'

'I thought I'd hang round and walk up with you,' said Earle.

'Thanks,' said Henry.

They walked for a little while without speaking.

'The fellows are pretty sore with me for losing the game — that holding,' Henry said.

'It was awfully hard luck,' said Earle.

'I didn't hold intentionally. It was an accident.'

'They must all know that.'

'They don't believe it.'

'How perfectly rotten of them! They ought to have more sense!'

'Well, they haven't. And of course it does sound sort of fishy — explaining that both times when I was holding it was accidental — because of slipping. I realize it seems fishy.'

'They ought to know you wouldn't do it on purpose,' said Earle.

Henry shrugged his shoulders.

As they entered the dormitory they heard Dinsmore calling from his room at the farther end of the corridor across to Sam Reed: 'That's a grand name your friend has, Sam, a grand name — Henry Dunn Noble!'

VI

WINTER SPORTS

MERCER, the Sixth-Former who was captain of the St. Timothy's football eleven, was a fair-minded fellow. He was troubled by the innuendoes which some of the members of his team were casting on Henry's sportsmanship. When Frank Dearborn, one of those who were most censorious in their comments, was elected captain for the following year, Mercer wrote to Richard Johnson, the captain of the victorious St. John's eleven, and asked him if he or Harris, who had played next to him in the line and whom Henry had been guilty of holding, had any recollection of the play that from a St. Timothy's point of view had been so disastrous. He explained that Noble, who was being severely criticized, had declared his holding had been quite involuntary, and caused by his slipping on the wet ground as he was charging; it would be a satisfaction if his opponent could confirm his recollection of the incident.

This the St. John's captain immediately did. He replied that he and Harris had talked over the play together after the game and that Harris had admitted it had been a lucky break for

St. John's — that just as he was trying to get through and tackle the runner Noble's feet had slipped and he had fallen forward and had unavoidably held him for a moment with knee and arm.

Mercer took the letter and at once went in search of Henry. It was a rainy afternoon, but Henry was not in his room or in the squash courts or in the gymnasium. Finally Mercer turned his steps to the Library, a building which he himself visited but seldom. In the doorway of the reading room he paused for a moment and glanced about at the boys who were sitting at the long tables, looking at magazines or absorbed in books and making notes from volumes open before them. Among these last was Henry Noble who sat directly in front of the doorway, with his back to it. Stepping up behind him quietly, Mercer saw that the book from which Henry was taking notes was a book of verse; in curiosity he looked over his shoulder to see what the poem was that he was copying. It was 'If,' by Rudyard Kipling. Mercer read the lines — not for the first time, but with a quickened sense of the meaning they might have for a fellow:

'If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give way to hating ——'

Henry's pen was carefully transcribing this last line when Mercer laid his hand on his shoulder.

Henry looked up into Mercer's smiling, understanding eyes.

'I've got some writing in my pocket that will do you a lot more good than that poem, Henry,' said Mercer. He sat down beside him and drew out the letter from the St. John's captain. 'Read that, Henry.'

The puzzled look on Henry's face cleared and gave way to a smile of happiness as he read the letter.

'That's awfully decent of them, isn't it?' He gave the letter back to Mercer almost as if he were reluctant to part with it, but his eyes shone and his voice was eager. 'And awfully decent of you, Phil, to have written to them about it.'

'I wanted to get the mess cleared up,' said Mercer, pocketing the letter. 'And now it is.' He rose, but before departing he put his hand again on Henry's shoulder and said, 'It's a good poem, Henry, but you don't need it now. Just file it away for future reference.'

When Mercer came out of the Library, he turned into the squash courts where Frank Dear-

born was playing a tournament match with Mansfield of the Sixth Form. Mercer sat in the chilly gallery and drummed the footboards with his toes and kept his hands stuffed in his overcoat pockets; it was a slow, uninteresting match to watch, but both players took it very seriously and repeatedly played points over because one of them had got in the other's way. Mercer thought impatiently that they couldn't have been more fussy if they had either of them stood the slightest chance of winning the tournament. But at last the match was finished, with Frank Dearborn victorious, and Mercer went down to the warm dressing-room and waited there while Frank changed his clothes. Then he produced the letter.

'Here's something I want you to read,' he said.

Mansfield had finished dressing and had departed; Mercer and Dearborn were left alone.

'It looks as if I'd made a mistake, doesn't it?' said Frank, as he handed back the letter.

'I was pretty sure you had. It wouldn't have been good for the team next year to have you and some of the others feeling suspicious of Noble.'

'I guess I'd better go and see him,' said Frank.

'You'll find him in the Library — no, perhaps he isn't there any longer. I found him there copying out that poem of Kipling's, "If" — trying to

keep his courage up. I told him he needn't go any further with it; nobody was going to misunderstand him any more.'

Dearborn made amends as best he could; Henry was soon aware of a friendlier feeling towards him on the part of fellows who for a time had been somewhat distant in their manner; his spirits regained their buoyancy, and Earle Castleman rejoiced over his vindication. But in Dinsmore the conviction persisted that slippery ground was not the sole explanation of Henry's lapses on the football field; his attitude toward him in the dining-room and elsewhere continued to be hostile — not the less so because Reed had again begun to show a pleasure in Henry's society greater than any that he seemed to receive from the companionship of his other friends.

Soon after the close of the football season the weather turned cold. One morning the word was passed round that the ice on the pond behind the gymnasium was thick enough for skating.

'I suppose all you Californians are wonderful skaters,' Dinsmore said to Henry at breakfast.

'I've never skated in my life,' Henry replied. 'I've never even seen any one skate.'

'You'll soon learn,' said Reed. 'Before the winter's over you'll probably be as good at hockey as you are at football.'

'Oh, sure thing,' said Dinsmore airily.

In the half hour of play time before lunch nearly all the fellows hastened to the pond, carrying their skating boots to which their skates were attached. Henry was as eager as any of them, and while he sat on the ground at the edge of the pond and fumbled at his shoelaces he watched those who were already skating. There were skaters of all degrees of skill, from Sam Reed and Dan Dinsmore, who sailed and swooped and floated with a marvelous ease and grace, down to stumbling and tumbling little First-Formers. Envy and desire filled Henry's heart; he must learn to do that beautiful, enchanting thing.

As he finished lacing up his skating boots, Reed and Dinsmore stopped on the ice near by, in order to see him start. Dinsmore was quite genial, offering him encouragement.

'It's just a matter of having perfect balance,' he said. 'And all you Californians are great horsemen. If you can do anything on a horse you can do anything on skates.'

'I don't see that it follows,' remarked Henry; he stood up cautiously, started to strike out, lost his balance, and went sprawling. He got to his feet, tried again, and scrambled rather than skated; his ankles turned under him, his arms described convulsive gestures in the air. Reed

and Dinsmore and several others skated about him for a few moments, offering jocose remarks, and then swung away to engage in a game of hockey.

Earle Castleman came up and diffidently made some suggestions, but felt uncomfortable in seeming to instruct Henry in any form of sport, and soon tactfully left him to himself. Watching his departing figure, Henry had a sense of vexation. To think that Earle Castleman could skate, and that he couldn't! He struggled to master the art, but his ankles buckled under him, and he scraped along on the sides of his shoes. After a while he rested and looked on at the hockey game. It fascinated him; he turned from it with an even more intense eagerness to learn. There was a game that he could play if he could only skate!

At supper Earle Castleman and Sam Reed told him that he couldn't expect to skate well the first time he had ever been on the ice, and that his ankles would behave better after he had used them a bit. But Dinsmore sneered at them for encouraging him and said that Californians seemed to lose their balance as easily on skates as they sometimes did in football. It was a satisfaction to Henry to notice that nobody at the table made any response now when Dinsmore talked in this vein, and that Sam Reed looked disgusted.

After staggering about on the ice during one more afternoon, without making any great progress towards proficiency in skating, Henry was disposed to welcome the snowstorm that made further skating for a time impossible. He thought that he could at least have as much enjoyment out of coasting as any one else could have; no expert knowledge or skill could be necessary for taking part in that sport.

When, dragging his newly purchased and shining sled, he came in sight of the long straight coast down Hedges' Hill, he quickened his steps in eagerness. Early in the afternoon though it was, others were ahead of him; they came skimming down the slope, a swift procession of dark recumbent figures against the white background of the snow. As he climbed the hill, one after another sped past him on the downward flight over the now well-worn track; Fred Slocum shot by, and Ted Westbury, and others of whose faces he could get no more than a glimpse. Hurrying forward, he nearly overtook Sam Reed and Dan Dinsmore who were hauling their sleds up the ascent in more leisurely manner. When at the top they turned and saw him approaching, they waited for him to join them; then, instead of starting immediately on the downward coast, they stood aside and told him to go first.

'You go ahead,' he said to them.

'No, no, after you, Alphonse,' said Reed politely.

'Let California show the way,' said Dinsmore.

Henry placed his sled with great care in the middle of the track, then extended himself prone upon it, gave a push with his toes and was off — with incomprehensible laughter from the witnesses of his start assailing his ears. A moment later Dinsmore flashed by him on one side, then Reed on the other.

When Henry reached the end of the coast and stood up, it was to receive the ironical applause of a little group that had stopped to watch him. Dinsmore called to him, 'Good work! We thought it would run away with you,' and Reed and Slocum and three or four others laughed.

'Here's Noble,' said Dinsmore. He placed his sled before him on the snow, carefully lowered himself upon it, asked anxiously, 'Is she pointing straight, fellows?' kicked frantically with his toes and shouted excitedly, 'We're off, boys; we're off!'

Henry joined, though somewhat ruefully, in the good-natured laughter. But when Dinsmore stood up, puffed out his chest, and said, 'Well, boys, here we are — safe and sound after our perilous journey,' Henry was goaded to defiance.

'If I can learn to ride a horse, I bet I can learn

to ride a sled,' he announced. 'When I get to the top of the hill, one of you fellows show me.'

So at the top of the hill Reed volunteered; he raised his sled aloft, ran with it for a few paces, then flung it down and himself upon it with one motion and no loss of speed.

'I get you,' said Henry. He hoisted and poised his sled and then made a rush and hurled himself and the sled forward, hard but clumsily. The rope that he had held too loosely fouled the runners and stopped the sled short; Henry was flung over the forward end of it and scraped along on his face, to the immense delight of the spectators. He picked himself up, grinning, though with a bloody nose, and looked on while one after another of those who had watched him took a run and a dive and darted down the slope.

He tried again with no spectators, but though he got away without mishap he knew that the effort had not been really successful. He kept on trying all the afternoon, and bruising his knees and shins; and after all his efforts the fellows told him derisively that he had better sit his sled the way he would a horse.

At supper Dinsmore entertained the fellows at the table with a description of Henry's method of coasting, ending with a graphic account of how he had tried to use his nose as a runner. Mr. Libby smiled, Henry laughed, all the fellows ex-

cept Earle Castleman were amused. Earle, who had himself a cautious and sedate manner of coasting, saw nothing funny in Dinsmore's remarks and therefore became the object of the humorist's notice.

'What's the matter, Castleman? Why are you so sour when everybody else is having a good time?'

'I don't see anything very funny in making fun of a fellow because he's a beginner,' said Earle.

'Good for you, Earle,' said Mr. Libby heartily. 'We all of us stand corrected.'

Then Earle blushed, uncertain whether Mr. Libby was not now poking fun at him. But none of the fellows jeered at him for blushing, as they usually did. Henry squeezed his leg under the table affectionately. Dinsmore dropped the attack that he had started, and after supper Mr. Libby, still seated at the table, stopped him as he was going out and holding him for a moment with his arm, said, 'You're coming along well, Earle.'

VII

VACATION LESSONS

For several days Henry had no further opportunity to acquire skill in either coasting or skating, for the weather turned mild, with rain. In dining-hall and in one another's rooms, the talk among the boys was mainly of the Christmas holidays, which were now drawing near, and of the festivities that they would bring. It was conversation in which Henry could not take part, for he was not going home; his father had decided that the journey to California and back would be too expensive to be worth undertaking, especially as it would allow him to have but a few days at home. His silence while the others at the table talked gayly of their plans and expectations did not pass unnoticed; Sam Reed asked him as they were walking together to their dormitory one evening after supper what his plans were.

'I guess I'll stay here and try to learn to coast and skate,' Henry answered.

'That's a deadly thing to do,' said Reed. Haven't you some relatives in the East you can visit?'

'No.'

'That's tough! I wish I could ask you to come

and spend Christmas with me in Boston, but we've got only one spare room, and my uncle and aunt are coming and will have to have that, and my kid cousin will be put in my kid brother's room, and he'll have to bunk with me. And the day after Christmas I'm going away on a house party, or I'd ask you to come then.'

'Thanks just the same.'

'I guess some one will invite you for Christmas when they find out what you're up against.'

'I don't want any one to take pity on me,' said Henry proudly. 'I expect to have a fine time right here.'

'Oh bunk, that's impossible. Of course you'll be invited somewhere.'

'You needn't suggest it to anybody.'

'There are lots of fellows that would be glad to have you visit them.'

'All right, but I don't want some one else to put the idea into their heads.'

'I think it will be rotten of your young friend Castleman if he doesn't invite you — after all you've done for him.'

'I should hate to have him feel he had to invite me for any such reason. Besides, his mother hasn't been well; she's had pleurisy. He told me the other day. He's been quite worried about her.'

'She'll probably be all right by Christmas,' said Reed. 'I guess he'll ask you.'

Henry did not like to have Reed or anybody else think that he would be unhappy if he received no invitation; he was vexed that Reed should concern himself so anxiously with the question where he would spend the Christmas holidays. He would have been more than vexed had he known that in spite of his warning Reed ventured to ask Dinsmore if there might not be a place for him in the house party. Dinsmore replied that he was very sorry, but it could not be arranged; the guests had all been invited and had accepted, and there was no place for any one else. And then Dinsmore added quite gratuitously that he really didn't care a hoot where or how Noble spent the holidays, and that if he had to stay at the School for them it was nothing for anybody else to lose sleep about.

'Have a heart,' said Reed. 'You wouldn't be so sour on the fellow if you didn't have such a bad cold.'

'It's a rotten cold all right,' croaked Dinsmore. 'Makes me feel mean all over.'

'Makes you talk mean, too. How would you like to be marooned up here over Christmas?'

'If you've got him so on your mind, why don't you take him in yourself?'

'Our house is going to be full of visiting relatives,' explained Reed. 'I'd be glad to if it weren't for that.'

'Then it's up to young Castleman.'

'His mother's got pleurisy.'

'I'll bet I've got pleurisy myself. Gosh, I feel rotten!'

Reed looked at his friend sharply. Dinsmore was lying on his bed with a quilt drawn over him up to his chin; his face was flushed and his eyes were feverish.

'You'd better go to the Infirmary,' Reed said with concern.

'I will if I don't feel better in the morning. I'm going to bed in a few minutes; I guess a good night's sleep will fix me up.'

Reed wished him luck, and bade him good-night, and returned to his studies. Later in the evening he found it would be convenient to get a little help from Castleman with the French translation, and after he had obtained this he bethought him to say that he had heard Castleman's mother had not been well and that he hoped she was better.

'Yes, thanks,' said Earle. 'I had a letter today; she's ever so much better. If she's well enough to travel, Father's going to take her to Florida next week.'

Reed paused at the door as he was about to

leave the room; the bit of information that Castleman had volunteered interested him.

'Then you'll be going to Florida for the holidays?' he asked.

'Yes, but I'd rather be at home.'

'I don't see why — summer weather, tennis, swimming, fishing — Florida sounds pretty good to me.'

But Reed returned to his room thinking that things were certainly breaking badly for Henry Noble; no chance now of his spending the holidays with Castleman. And to Earle the thought of Henry being left behind when all the other fellows started on their Christmas vacation was even more distressing than it was to Reed. He had written to ask his father if he might not invite Henry to accompany them to Florida, but Mr. Castleman had not encouraged the proposal.

'Some other time,' he had written. 'Your mother needs to be quiet, and I am afraid that if there was a strange boy in the party the responsibility for him would worry her.'

Earle explained to Henry why he and his family could not be hospitable to him during the Christmas holidays; Henry had thanked him for the thought and assured him that he wouldn't mind staying at the School. Yet he could not help hoping that some fellow whom he liked

would still invite him for Christmas Day at least.

He was late the next morning in making his bed and tidying up his room; glancing at his watch he wondered why Reed had not yet been round on his tour of inspection, and he felt he was in luck to have escaped the 'bawling out' and 'dust' to which his dilatoriness might reasonably have entitled him. When he came out into the corridor, he saw Reed with his arm round Dinsmore, half supporting him, emerging from Dinsmore's room.

'What's the matter — sick?' Henry asked and came forward to give assistance.

'Bad cold — he feels weak and giddy,' Reed explained, as Henry placed himself on Dinsmore's other side. 'We'll take him to the Infirmary.'

'Nothing much the matter,' said Dinsmore in a hoarse whisper.

Reed told him to shut up and not try to talk — especially outdoors in the cold air.

They conducted him without difficulty to the Infirmary, put him in charge of a nurse, and had just time enough to slip into their seats in chapel before morning prayers began. At lunch Reed reported that he had called at the Infirmary and had learned that Dinsmore had been put to bed and was not to see any one that afternoon; he had a temperature.

'Tough luck if he shouldn't be able to go home for the holidays,' said Price who sat on the other side of Dinsmore's vacant chair.

'It's nothing but a bad cold; he'll be able to go home all right,' said Reed.

The next day Reed and Henry called together at the Infirmary to inquire about Dinsmore.

'He can't see any one,' said the nurse. 'His temperature is still up. But it's nothing to worry about.'

But when the two boys and Fred Slocum presented themselves at the Infirmary at noon on the following day, the information given in response to their inquiry was not so reassuring.

'It's pneumonia,' said the nurse. 'A light case, we hope. His mother's coming up from Boston this afternoon. It will do him good to have her here.'

Pneumonia! And less than ten days now to the Christmas vacation!

'A swell chance of our going on that house party to Maine,' observed Fred Slocum to Reed as they turned away from the Infirmary door.

Reed gave him a glance of disgust. 'Is that all you think of!'

'No, of course not.' Slocum looked somewhat shamefaced. 'But naturally when a fellow's been thinking of it and has made his plans — well, it's a sort of a jolt, that's all. I guess Dan's

not going to be very sick — a light case, the nurse said.'

'I hope she's right.' Reed turned to Henry. 'If that house party is off, Henry, you must come and visit me in Boston for the time I would have been away on it.'

'That's mighty good of you,' said Henry gratefully. 'But you'd better make sure first that it will be convenient for your family.'

'It will be convenient for them all right. Queer, won't it be, if it's Dan instead of you that has to spend most of the vacation here.'

'I guess he'll be going home with the rest of us,' said Slocum. 'I guess he'll have the house party. I don't believe the nurse knows a blooming thing about it. Probably just a bad cold with fever; I guess that's all that's the matter with him.'

'I hope you're right,' said Reed. 'But I can't see any reason to suppose you are.'

Slocum was quite wrong in his opinion. The headmaster, whom Reed happened to meet during the afternoon as he was hastening to the pond to skate, confirmed the nurse's statement and added with a note of anxiety in his voice that Dan Dinsmore was a pretty sick boy.

'You don't think there's any danger do you, sir?' said Reed.

'His condition isn't critical at present.'

Reed proceeded somewhat soberly to his skating. But in the midst of a hockey game he soon freed himself of disquieting thoughts. Anxiety returned to him that evening when he heard from Mr. Libby that a specialist from Boston had been summoned.

'It sounds alarming, of course,' said Mr. Libby. 'But it simply means they're doing everything for him that's possible.'

During the next three days eyes, wondering and thoughtful, often glanced into Dinsmore's room, where his Cicero open on his table, and half-finished Latin exercise beside it lay just as he had left them. There was a softened expression in the faces of boys in the dining-hall when their gaze fell on his empty chair. His friends all knew now that he was desperately ill; they none of them spoke to one another of their fear that he might never come back to the empty room or occupy again the vacant chair. They pursued their studies and their sports as usual, forgetting him temporarily in the interest of work or play, an interest which was again and again suspended as some picture of him came unbidden to their minds.

Then at breakfast one morning Mr. Libby announced definitely good news. Dinsmore's respiration was better, he had slept well, his fever had subsided; it was reasonably safe to believe that he had passed the crisis.

'What a relief!' exclaimed Reed. 'I feel like a million dollars!'

'Gosh, it's good!' said Henry.

'A fellow will be able to enjoy the vacation now,' said Price.

Earle Castleman glanced at Henry sympathetically; he did not know of the invitation that Reed had given him.

'You bet we will, won't we, Henry?' Reed said, and then he explained to the other fellows, 'Henry's going to spend part of the vacation with me in Boston.'

'If you're sure it will be all right,' Henry said; and Reed answered, 'I know it will be all right.'

'That's mighty good,' said Earle to Henry. 'I'm awfully glad you won't have to be here for Christmas after all.'

Reed looked a trifle embarrassed, and Henry said quickly, 'Oh, I shall be here for Christmas; I'm going to visit Sam some time after Christmas.'

'You won't find it at all bad here,' said Mr. Libby encouragingly. 'No better place that I know of for winter sports; there are always half a dozen fellows who have to stay for one reason or another.'

Three days later it was still dark outdoors when Henry was awakened by the sound of

cheering — first, faint soprano voices of little Lower School boys giving their farewell cheer before climbing into the motor buses that were to transport them to the train; then a few moments later the deeper cheers of the older fellows — and Henry realized then with a sort of homesick feeling that his friends had all gone. He went to sleep again and got up at the usual hour; when he arrived at the dining-room for breakfast, he found but one of the tables set and at it a couple of youngsters of the Third Form and one forlorn little boy of the Second. He questioned them and found that their reasons for remaining were similar to his; one of the Third-Formers lived in Oregon, the other in Honolulu; the parents of the Second Former were in Europe. They were all somewhat in awe of Henry as an older boy and a member of the School football team, and they seemed grateful for his interest in them; but after breakfast they went off to play by themselves, and Henry felt almost as if he were facing a world of emptiness.

It was a fine December morning, cold, still, with the sun shining. Henry took his skates and went to the pond. He had it all to himself for a while, but then to his embarrassment a girl whom he had never before seen, a girl of about his own age, appeared at the edge of the pond, seated herself, and put on her skates. Henry re-

treated to a remote cove and tried to make it appear that he moved slowly from choice rather than from awkwardness.

The girl came floating out on the ice, describing the most graceful curves, leaning now to this side, now to that, skimming the surface with never a wobble or a scrape of her skates — seeming to Henry, who had never before seen a girl skate, quite fairylike in her lightness and ease of motion. She was a gay figure in her red hat and white sweater, and though Henry did not venture to draw near he could see that she was pretty, with bright color in her cheeks and with light hair that shone in the sun. She appeared unaware of his being on the ice; she circled and swayed and floated about at one end of the pond while Henry, relieved to think that she ignored his efforts, tried to circle and sway and float at the other.

After a time, however, he was horrified to see that she was coming towards him and evidently with the purpose of addressing him. In his dismay he tried to bring himself to a sudden stop, lost his balance, and regained it only by lurching backward and waving both arms in an undignified manner above his head.

'Don't you want to skate with me for a while?' said the girl. 'Sometimes it's easier to learn if you have some one to coach you.'

'Thanks ever so much. But I'm afraid it won't be much fun for you.'

A moment later they were skating hand in hand, she aiding him with a firm grip to keep his balance and counting for each stroke — 'One — two — one — two.'

'How is it that you never learned before?' she asked.

He explained that he had lived always in Southern California.

'So you couldn't go home for Christmas! Too bad.'

'Do you live here?' Henry asked, thinking it strange that he had never seen her before.

'No. My brother's sick, and I came up with Mother to be with him.'

'You're Dan Dinsmore's sister?'

'Yes. Do you know Dan?'

'We live in the same building and eat at the same table. I'm so glad he's getting on all right.'

'Isn't it splendid! You must come in and see him. He can see people now, the doctor says.'

'I'll go to the Infirmary after my lesson.'

Presently she made Henry skate alone.

'I'll have you doing the outer edge in a few days,' she declared. 'You're really a prize pupil.'

Seldom had any praise sounded so sweet in his ears. And certainly he had not imagined that his Christmas vacation would begin so pleasantly.

He accompanied the girl to the Infirmary and was admitted to her brother's room. Dan grasped his hand eagerly; he looked pale and hollow-eyed, but he told Henry he was feeling fine and that the doctor had said he might sit up for half an hour.

'Are you going to be around here all the vacation?' he asked.

'No; Sam Reed has asked me to make him a visit in Boston after Christmas.'

'That's good. I guess I'll get home for the last part of the vacation myself. — Where did you and Marjorie pick each other up?'

'On the ice,' said Marjorie. 'He tried to keep away from me, but he didn't succeed.'

'Your sister has been teaching me to skate,' Henry said. 'She's wonderful at it.'

'She's pretty good at fancy skating — girls' stuff,' said Dan. 'She won't help you much for hockey.'

Mrs. Dinsmore came into the room at that moment, a friendly, kindly lady whose rejoicing over her son's convalescence shone in her face. She expressed sympathy with Henry on account of his inability to go home for Christmas and said that he must help them to celebrate Christmas.

'We must have a party,' she said. 'Are there any other boys who weren't able to go home?'

Henry told her of the three youngsters.

'Poor little fellows! We'll gather them in, too.'

So on Christmas Day Mr. and Mrs. Dinsmore and Marjorie entertained the four boys at a sumptuous dinner at the local inn, and afterwards took them to Dan's room in the Infirmary, where there was a Christmas tree decorated and lighted and bearing gifts for each one. Henry received from Dan a pair of skis.

'Something for you to tumble about on when you've got done with tumbling about on skates and sleds,' said Dan.

'He doesn't tumble about on skates,' said Marjorie. 'He's beginning to skate very nicely.'

More thrilling to Henry and also more embarrassing than the gift of skis was the discovery of a present from Marjorie herself — nothing more romantic than a necktie, but that was a gift poignant enough to one who had thoughtlessly neglected to remember his kind teacher with so much as a flower or a box of candy.

'What a goat! What a chump!' Henry silently upbraided himself while he assured Marjorie that it was the prettiest necktie that he had ever owned.

That evening Henry and the three other boys went to the headmaster's house, where they ate a second Christmas dinner and took part in a second Christmas-tree celebration from which

more presents for them were produced. Henry went to bed thinking that even if he had not been able to spend Christmas at home there was nothing at all forlorn in passing it in the next best place on earth.

Two days later he said good-bye to the Dinsmores before taking the train to Boston for his visit with Sam Reed.

'I'll see you there in a week,' said Dan, 'and after you've finished your visit with Sam you must come and spend the rest of the vacation with me.'

'Yes,' said Mrs. Dinsmore. 'We should love to have you — and you mustn't think of coming back to School before term-time!'

When Henry returned to St. Timothy's at the end of the holidays with Sam and Dan, the skating was still good. On the first afternoon he took part in a scrub hockey game and amazed the other fellows by his speed if not his skill. Price began to talk about it at the supper table that evening.

'Why, before the vacation you could hardly stand up on skates,' Price said. 'How did you learn so quickly?'

'Any one can learn to skate if he has a good teacher,' said Henry.

'Who was your teacher?' asked Price.

Dan Dinsmore laughed and said, 'Henry

AMAZED THE OTHER FELLOWS BY HIS SPEED

came down to Boston and stayed with Sam and me for a while. You can learn anything in Boston very quickly.'

'Huh!' said Price, who came from New York.

'Yes,' said Henry. 'Boston's almost as good a town as Los Angeles.'

'Huh!' said Sam Reed and Dan Dinsmore in unison.

VIII

LITERARY AMBITIONS

THE second term Henry no longer had the sense of being conspicuously a new boy. The routine of the school life had become so familiar to him that it seemed extraordinary he had known it for only a little more than three months. Yet he was not one of those who complained of the monotony of the life; he found new interests even in the dull days of the winter season. When there was no hockey he played squash racquets, a game that he took up under Reed's and Dinsmore's instigation; he was soon able to play with them on equal terms. Each of them confided to him that while the other was a grand fellow in almost every way he had one weakness; in squash racquets he had a habit of frequently protesting that his opponent had interfered with his stroke. Henry could not see from his own experience that the charge could be laid against Reed with any justice, but Dinsmore often asked to have points played over when his opponent was unaware of having prevented him in any way from going after the ball. To find that in squash racquets as well as in football, Dinsmore was overzealous to detect interference on the part of the

other fellow was a discovery in character that amused Henry, but one that he did not comment on to his friends. He reflected philosophically that every one has faults, and he was sure that Dinsmore, in spite of his pettiness and his extreme eagerness always to win, would not take a mean advantage of any one.

By chance Henry was drawn into a field of interests in which Reed and Dinsmore had no share and which brought him into contact with several of the fellows of the Fifth and Sixth Forms. Mr. West, his teacher in English, asked him to stop after class one day.

When Henry came up to the master's desk, Mr. West said, 'Noble, have you ever thought of handing in any work for the Mirror?'

'No,' said Henry, 'I'm not literary.'

'You have interesting things to write about,' said Mr. West. 'Mexicans, Indians, ranching — subjects that are unfamiliar to most of us here. And you write picturesque compositions about them. I should like to turn your description of that Indian school you visited over to the Mirror editors.'

Henry was pleased but uncertain.

'I don't care much about seeing myself in print. I'm not literary,' he repeated.

'Writing occasionally for the Mirror doesn't mean that you're literary,' said Mr. West, pre-

serving his gravity. 'As you know, a good deal of the paper is taken up with accounts of school sports and other activities, and you might be interested in doing that sort of journalistic work. For instance, it's helpful when some of the older fellows who are athletic write up the football and hockey games. Hugh Warner isn't a great literary light, but he's a useful member of the Mirror board. If you will let me hand in this article, perhaps you'll decide to try for the Mirror; and I think that if you make it, you will find it an interesting and pleasant job.'

Hugh Warner was a prominent member of the Fifth Form. He had played on the first Corinthian football eleven and would undoubtedly be a member of the School eleven the next year. Henry thought him a rather domineering fellow and did not regard his membership on the Mirror board as offering any particular incentive to literary effort. But he did not wish to be ungrateful to Mr. West; so he said that he was willing to have his composition given to the editors, but that he wouldn't be surprised or feel badly if they failed to make use of it.

A few days later Edward Barrett of the Sixth Form, the editor-in-chief of the paper, called on Henry in his room.

'I'm mighty glad you're coming out for the Mirror, Noble,' he said. 'We're going to print

that article of yours, and I hope you'll be the first fellow from your Form to make the board.'

'But I don't really go in for writing,' Henry protested. And he repeated the statement he had made to Mr. West, 'I'm not literary.'

'You're literary enough. You're the kind of fellow we want. Keep up the good work.'

Although he was somewhat pleased by the attention shown him, Henry was puzzled. He could not understand why Barrett should single him out as an object of such particular favor when there were three or four other fellows in the Fourth Form who certainly had more talent. The fact was that the Mirror editors, aware that there was no great prestige in being 'literary,' liked to count among their number two or three fellows who had standing and influence in the School; to capture Henry as the first editor from the Fourth Form would be to create among his classmates a greater respect for the paper than they would feel were some quiet, unimportant, 'literary' person the first one to be elected. Considerations of such a worldly nature were of much weight with Barrett, who had used his influence to have Hugh Warner made an editor of the Mirror. Of all the Fourth-Formers who had handed in contributions, Henry Noble was the only one who on account of athletic prowess

and general popularity seemed to Barrett likely to shed luster on the editorial body.

The Mirror came out containing Henry's article on the Indian school. Henry received compliments from every quarter. Earle Castleman was especially enthusiastic in his praise of his friend's work.

'You remember so well the things that you see,' he remarked.

'You remember so well the things that you read,' Henry replied.

'I'd rather have your kind of a memory. It's more useful.'

'Not for passing examinations.'

Earle gave a shrug of impatience. 'What do they amount to!'

'A good deal, in our young life. Earle, you're literary; why don't you try for the Mirror?'

'Oh, I couldn't write anything worth printing.'

'Of course you could. I'll try for it if you will.'

So Earle somewhat against his inclination found himself committed to making the effort. He was sure that not only would his contributions be unacceptable but that his candidacy for a place on the Mirror board would be unwelcome; he was merely inviting rebuffs. For some days he spent much of his free time in the Library; then at the cost of much labor he produced a story of a duel fought between two British

officers during the British occupation of New York in the Revolutionary War. He read it to Henry, who pronounced it exciting and was enthusiastic in praise of it. So Earle gave the manuscript to Barrett; the story was printed in the number of the Mirror following that in which Henry's article on the Indian school had appeared. It drew upon Earle at once unflattering remarks from Dinsmore, who told him at the supper table that he had read his punk story and wondered why the Mirror editors had thought it worth printing.

'Mighty good story,' said Henry stoutly. 'I bet Earle's going to be the best story writer in the Form.'

'It has atmosphere, that story,' said Mr. Libby. 'It's a good study of the period, Earle.'

'Dinsmore has no appreciation of literature any way,' said Reed. 'Don't let anything he says worry you, Earle.'

'If I wasn't so busy with more important things I'd try my hand at writing stories myself and show you all,' said Dinsmore.

Encouraged by his success with his first contribution and even more by the interest that he had unexpectedly found in working on his story, Earle began to plan a second tale. He finished it before the Easter holidays; Henry, to whom he read it, declared it was better than the first.

'You're getting ahead of me,' said Henry. 'I haven't even started on a second article for the Mirror.'

'I won't hand this in till you're ready with a second one,' said Earle.

'You certainly will. I'll come along when I can, but there's no point in your holding back when you've got a good thing. You hand it in to Barrett to-morrow — you understand?'

Thus urged on and fired by awakening ambition, Earle visited Barrett's room in the Upper School for the second time and delivered his manuscript into the editor's hands. Barrett received it patronizingly and with no show of cordiality. He felt it would be nothing less than a calamity to the Mirror if so inconsequential a person as Castleman should establish a claim to priority of election to the editorial board. After he had read the story, his apprehension increased; it was certainly a story that the Mirror, chronically in need of good material, would have to print. He paid a visit immediately to Henry and begged him to turn in another article soon.

'An essay, a description, any kind of an article,' he implored him. 'We're not getting enough good stuff, and your Form isn't doing what it should. There's only one other fellow besides yourself that's contributed.'

'Earle Castleman; he's good,' said Henry.

'Not bad,' Barrett admitted. 'But the point is, we want to get other fellows from your Form writing, and they're more likely to if you get the habit regularly. So try to have something for me for the next number, won't you?'

Henry was not proof against the compliment of being thus importuned by an influential Sixth-Former. Besides, he thought that if he and Earle were the only contributors to the Mirror from the Fourth Form, they would be taken on the editorial board together, and without undue egotism he knew that Earle would be much happier going on with him than receiving the honor of election alone. And of course if they kept pace with each other in their contributions they would be elected to the board at the same time — probably a month or so before the end of the year. So Henry promised to submit a second article for editorial consideration within a short time; Barrett clapped him on the back, told him that he would count on it, that in fact, with the scarcity of material on hand, his contribution was absolutely necessary, and begged him to get it in within a week, if possible.

For several days Henry did not visit the squash courts; he occupied himself during his spare time in writing an account of a trip that he had made with his father the year before through the Imperial Valley across the Mexican line into

Lower California. Except that the scenes he described were quite different from those familiar to most of the readers of the Mirror, he could not see any reason for any one to be interested in what he had written; he himself cared nothing at all about reading descriptions of trips on which nothing exciting happened. But no other subject for an article had come to his mind, and he had to fulfill his promise to Barrett and also catch up with Earle. The day after that on which he delivered the manuscript to Barrett, the editor told him that he had read it and that it was fine, something new and interesting; it would appear in the next number, the first one after the spring vacation.

'Is Castleman's story coming out then, too?' Henry asked.

'I don't know. It's not very good; still we may be able to make a place for it.'

'I read it; I thought it was awfully good. Much more interesting than this thing of mine.'

'You're too modest — no judge of your own work.'

'I hope you'll print Castleman's, too,' Henry said uneasily.

'I haven't really decided about it yet. But there's no doubt about our printing yours.'

Barrett departed to attend one of his classes, leaving Henry dissatisfied. He remembered that

Barrett had expressed the wish to see him the first editor elected from the Fourth Form; it was a distinction that he was not ambitious to have, and it would be most unfair to Earle if he received it. Not that Earle would be deeply disappointed; and of course he would be taken on the board eventually. But to be preferred undeservedly to a fellow to whom he was only trying to be a sort of pacemaker — that would make him most uncomfortable. Well, he told himself, there was no use in looking ahead and imagining something that might not happen.

He spent the Easter holidays with the Castlemans in New York. A full month before they began Mrs. Castleman had written him a letter of invitation in which she had expressed her regret at not having been able to have him spend the Christmas vacation with them and her hope that nothing would prevent his coming to them at Easter. He had accepted the invitation with alacrity, yet he had some regrets later when he had to decline similar invitations that he received from both Mrs. Reed and Mrs. Dinsmore.

'That's too bad,' Dinsmore said, when Henry explained to him why he could not make the visit to Boston. 'Mother ought to have written to you earlier. Well, you'll have a good time in New York any way. Probably go to lots of parties.'

Dinsmore's surmise was correct. Every night of the vacation Earle and Henry went to either a dance or a theater party; they stayed in bed every day until nearly noon. Earle took but a languid interest in dancing and pronounced most of the shows that they went to rotten. Henry thought that if Earle had been allowed to follow his own desires he would have spent a good deal of the vacation reading. The Castlemans had an enormous library, but as often as the boys were comfortably settled in it absorbed in books, Mrs. Castleman would come in and say that the car was waiting to take them to the Woolworth Building or the Bronx Zoo or the Natural History Museum or some other place of interest. Henry felt that Earle was kept constantly in activity in order that the guest might be properly entertained. And both Mr. and Mrs. Castleman treated the guest with a consideration that was embarrassing. Mr. Castleman questioned him on one occasion when Earle was not in the room about Earle's relations with other boys and seemed immensely pleased when Henry said that though at first some fellows had been disposed to pick on him they didn't do that any more and that he now knew how to look out for himself.

'Your friendship has been a great thing for him; he looks up to you, and your influence has

done him more good than almost anything else at St. Timothy's; I'm convinced of it,' said Mr. Castleman.

'Oh, no, he's just coming along naturally,' Henry protested.

'You've got him interested in trying to write; he's never before been really interested in trying to do anything. I don't suppose that he'll ever be a great writer — but to have at last an interest — that's the hopeful sign. I think he's become quite ambitious to make the School paper.'

'He's sure to make it some time if he keeps on trying. He writes mighty well.'

'Yes. I've been quite surprised. — I hope he won't be disappointed now, in this first real ambition of his.'

Henry's observations during his visit led him to think that Earle was too much watched over and guided at home and that for this reason he was backward in showing initiative and activity. Hospitable and kind as both Mr. and Mrs. Castleman were, he himself felt somewhat relieved when it was time to return to school; there had been no such freedom and informality of life in the Park Avenue apartment as he had enjoyed during his visits to the Reeds and the Dinsmores.

The Mirror appeared about a week after the boys had returned to the School. It contained Henry's article and among other contributions a

story by Ralph Butler, a member of the Fourth Form. Earle's story was not included. Earle came into Henry's room while he was looking over the number and congratulated him upon his article.

'I don't see why your story wasn't printed, too,' Henry said. 'It's a lot better than Ralph Butler's. They haven't returned it to you, have they?'

'No.'

'That means of course that they're going to use it some time.'

'They haven't said so.'

'If they weren't, they would have returned it. And don't wait for it to come out; get something else written and shoot it in at them. I've got my mind made up to seeing you first editor from our Form.'

'I don't believe I'll write another until I find out whether they want this one,' said Earle.

His tone as well as the remark betokened discouragement.

'That's foolish. You're going to make the paper. You must make it as soon as possible. Keep turning things in to the editor. They can't long keep a fellow off who's slipping them a contribution every few minutes.'

'I don't especially want to get on if they don't want me on.'

'You've no reason to feel they don't want you. Don't get morbid!'

'No, I think they'll probably take you and Ralph Butler, and not me.'

'You make me tired when you talk like that.'

'All right; I'm sorry.'

Earle withdrew and left Henry feeling somewhat as if he had hit a fellow when he was down. He had an uncomfortable suspicion that Earle in his sensitiveness had found the true explanation of the non-appearance of his story. Probably the editors were unwilling to take him on the board immediately and were for that reason deliberately holding back his work. It was quite likely that Barrett and Hugh Warner would prefer to add fellows who were better known and better liked than Earle was to the list of their editorial associates; Ralph Butler was a genial person and a good athlete, and had social gifts that Earle certainly lacked. Now that Earle's pride was touched and he had reason to think that his membership on the board was not desired, he would probably make no efforts to attain it.

But with the advance of spring and the opening up of new and pleasant activities Henry found less and less opportunity to consider Earle's problems, and in fact Earle did not intimate to him that there were any problems troubling him. Henry went out for rowing and was as-

signed to a place on the second Pythian crew; he spent his afternoons at the pond and acquired a new set of interests and companions with which Earle had no points of contact. He wrote no more articles for the Mirror, and as he was able to produce no effect on Earle by urging him to submit other contributions he abandoned the subject; it was only too clear that unless the editors urged Earle to make other contributions, he would offer them nothing more.

IX

THE NEW EDITOR

In May another number of the Mirror was issued; Ralph Butler was again a contributor. And the announcement was made that Henry Dunn Noble and Ralph Butler had been elected from the Fourth Form to the board of editors.

The papers were distributed to the boys as they sat at lunch, and during the cessation of talk while they turned the pages Reed's eye was the first to light on the editorial item.

'Hi, look at this!' he exclaimed. 'Why don't you tell a fellow, Henry? They've made him an editor!'

'What are you talking about!' said Henry incredulously.

'Didn't you know? Page 115, you and Ralph Butler have been taken on together.'

'Great work, Henry,' said Dinsmore, and all the others at the table likewise offered their congratulations.

'You're quite the fellow, Henry,' said Reed. 'Great football player, great hockey player, great oarsman, great literary light. Quite the boy.'

'I don't mind Henry's being taken on the Mir-

ror,' said Dinsmore. 'But Ralph Butler as a literary man — that makes me laugh! I'd be as good an editor myself. If they wanted to take another fellow from the Fourth, why didn't they take Earle here? He had a story printed that wasn't so bad — a lot better than Ralph Butler's drip.'

Earle flushed with pleasure and embarrassment at this unexpected bit of appreciation.

'Yes, that's so,' said Reed. 'Why didn't you ever write any more, Earle? If you had, you'd have been taken on sure, ahead of either of these dubs.'

'He's going to write some more now,' said Henry. 'Now that I'm an editor I'm going to get after him.'

But Henry knew that his powers of persuasion would have to be exerted upon the other editors rather than upon Earle.

Hugh Warner was the first member of the board to congratulate him, Barrett the second. Warner was especially cordial, threw his arm across his shoulders and walked with him from the dining-hall to the bus that was waiting to take the Pythian oarsmen to the lake for their afternoon's practice.

'I'm tickled to death you and Ralph Butler are the two fellows from the Fourth to make the Mirror,' he said. 'You're just the kind, both of

you. The paper's all set now for a great year next year.'

'I was a good deal surprised at being taken on,' said Henry. 'There are other fellows in the Form that are better at literary work than I am — better writers ——'

'We can take the writers in any time,' said Warner. 'I'm nothing of a literary fellow myself, you know. But the important thing is to get fellows from each Form that will give a kind of tone, you know. Then the fellows that can write — they can come on later.'

Henry thought it was a rather strange principle to govern elections to a board of editors, but he made no comment. He said he had a friend who had had a story published — Earle Castleman — and that he had sent in a second story which the Mirror had kept now for a couple of months without printing it. He asked Warner if he thought it ever would be published.

'Oh, I don't keep track of manuscripts,' Warner answered. 'You'd better ask Barrett. Or Crane. I guess Crane would be more likely to know; he's more of a literary fellow.'

Henry did not know Norman Crane and he looked forward with some curiosity to meeting him. Crane was regarded as the most brilliant fellow in the Fifth Form; the poems and stories

that he wrote for the Mirror were acknowledged to be the contributions of outstanding merit printed during the year; and Henry supposed that without doubt he would be made editor-in-chief for the next year. But at the first meeting of the board of editors that Henry attended, it became clear that there were two rival factions, one headed by Barrett, the other by Crane. The issue that brought this fact at once to Henry's attention was the disposition to be made of Earle Castleman's story. Crane, a slim pleasant-looking fellow, with quick bright eyes and a quiet, self-contained manner, had sat in silence while Barrett and Warner outlined their ideas of what the final number of the Mirror for the year should contain.

'It will have to be practically all news,' said Barrett, and Warner agreed with him. 'There will be the boat races and the track sports and the baseball games to be written up — Butler, you'll do the baseball, won't you, and Noble, we'll count on you to do the boat races. Spencer will help both of you with the writing, won't you, Spencer? If you fellows will turn in the notes, with all the dope, Spencer will put them into shape — isn't that right?'

Spencer, a Fifth-Former, a pale and willing literary drudge, said mildly that he would do the best he could.

'And then there will be Anniversary to be written up,' continued Barrett. 'Who'll do Anniversary?'

'Don't all speak at once,' said Warner.

'We ought to have a good article about that — the big day of the year,' said Barrett. 'Crane, why don't you do Anniversary? You'll do it better than any one else.'

'I've turned in more work this year than any other member of the board,' said Crane firmly. 'I'm not at all keen to do Anniversary. Warner, why shouldn't you do it?'

'No, I can't.' Warner spoke with crisp determination. 'With all the athletics I'm doing and my studies I have my hands full. Barrett's right; you're the best one to write the Anniversary article.'

'We've had a good story on hand for months,' said Crane abruptly. 'There's no need to make the last number of the year just a news number. That story of Castleman's will fill a good deal of space.'

'I don't know that we need be in any hurry about printing it,' said Barrett.

'We certainly haven't been in any hurry about it. We've kept it now for at least two months. What's your objection to using it?'

Barrett glanced at Warner. 'Why not let it go over till next year?'

'Why should we? There's no advantage in printing an all news number when we have some good stuff of another kind. We've stalled enough about this story of Castleman's; we ought either to print it or return it.'

'Well, why not hand it back to him?' said Warner.

'If you do, you'll discourage the most promising contributor in the School.'

'Oh, I don't know about that,' said Barrett. 'Still, it might be a mistake to hand it back. Castleman may be useful some time.'

Talbot of the Sixth Form, who with Wyeth and Spencer and the two new editors had listened to the discussion in silence, now spoke up.

'We've got the two fellows in from the Fourth Form that we want,' he said bluntly. 'I don't see that there's any reason for holding back on Castleman now.'

'I suppose it's a question for the fellows that are to be on next year's board to decide,' said Barrett. 'As you all know, my interest has been in keeping up the prestige of the Mirror — seeing that as far as possible we elected representative fellows as editors. We've made a good start with the Fourth Form. If we print Castleman's story, that will be the second thing of his to be printed and he will be eligible then for election. The only question is whether it wouldn't be better to

keep him waiting till you've built up the personnel of the board a little more.'

'That's exactly the way I look at it,' said Warner. 'That's why I think we shouldn't be in a hurry to print Castleman's piece.'

'I know Castleman pretty well,' said Henry. 'He's very shy, but he'd do a lot of good work if you took him on the paper. And I can't see how it could be any disadvantage to have him on.'

'Oh, I don't know,' said Ralph Butler. 'He's pretty much my idea of just nothing at all. He's the kind of fellow that writes because he can't do anything else.'

'Yes,' said Warner. 'And that's just what we want to avoid. We don't want to give the impression that the fellows on the Mirror board are fellows who can't do anything but write.'

'Still,' said Crane, 'it's just as well to have one or two who can at least do that.'

'You're pretty good at wisecracks, Norman,' said Warner. 'But if the Mirror is to stand for anything in the eyes of the School it's got to have a board of editors that aren't looked upon as fellows that are sort of insignificant.'

'We've got several good football players and oarsmen on now,' said Crane. 'Why not give a fellow that can write a chance?'

Henry felt uncomfortable, not only because the atmosphere of the meeting was getting some-

what tense but also because he did not seem to be standing up for Castleman as heartily as he wanted to do. It was hard to know how far a novice on the board might go without damaging his influence.

'I think I know Castleman a good deal better than Butler does,' he said. 'He isn't my idea of nothing at all — not by any means.'

'Any way the question of his election can't come up now,' said Barrett somewhat impatiently.

'No, and while Noble may be right about him, the general impression is certainly the same as Butler's,' said Warner.

'The question, though, is what we're going to do with his story,' said Crane. 'You fellows all seem to want me to write the Anniversary article. I'm not keen to do it, but I will on condition that Castleman's story is printed in the same number.'

'I don't see why you should be so much interested in pushing Castleman in,' said Warner.

'I think it's for the good of the paper.'

'It's for that very reason I'd go slow on him.'

'Well, there you are.' Crane's voice had the ring of finality. 'I'll write the article on that condition.'

'I guess no one else wants to do it — and no one else would do it so well,' remarked Barrett

after a pause. 'All right, Norman; we won't hold up Castleman's story any longer. I hope you fellows won't find next year that you've got into a hole by printing it.'

'I'm afraid we shall,' said Warner.

'I'm not such a pessimist,' said Crane.

Warner shrugged his shoulders; it was evident that he did not like being called a pessimist and that he was vexed at having been worsted in the argument over Castleman and his story. Crane showed no disposition, however, to exult over the fact that he had carried his point; on the other hand, he lamented good-naturedly that Warner and Barrett had driven such a hard bargain with him and that they were such lazy loafers themselves when it came to writing up the important happenings in the School.

'May I tell Castleman that his story is to be printed?' Henry asked.

'Why, yes, I suppose so,' Barrett said somewhat reluctantly.

'It will buck him up a lot,' Henry explained. 'He's been sort of down on his luck.'

The meeting broke up pleasantly enough. Barrett reminded the members of the board that there would be but one more meeting — to elect an editor-in-chief for the ensuing year. 'Two weeks from to-day here, at this same hour,' he said. 'And I don't mind telling now whoever it is

that will be elected that he won't find it an easy job.'

Henry came away from the meeting with a great respect for Norman Crane and a somewhat diminished admiration for Hugh Warner. It had disappointed him to find that Warner, who had been quite friendly and encouraging to him on the athletic field, should be so narrow and prejudiced in his ideas about the Mirror, and so unfair to a fellow as inoffensive and as deserving as Castleman. But Warner had apparently not resented at all Henry's setting himself on the side of Crane; he was as genial with him after the meeting as he was with Butler, and he expressed again his satisfaction that Henry was now an editor and said it helped the prospects of the paper for the next year to have him on the board. Crane on the other hand did not trouble himself to seek a better acquaintance with either of the new editors. The other members of the board Henry found friendly, especially John Wyeth of the Fifth Form, who had played on the first Corinthian football eleven and was rowing on the second Corinthian crew; he stood talking with Henry for a few moments in the corridor after the others had departed.

'I'm glad you backed up Crane on that question about Castleman,' Wyeth said. 'He's the fellow that ought to be editor-in-chief next year.'

'I should think so,' Henry answered.

'I doubt if he'll be elected though.'

'Why, who stands a better chance?'

Wyeth laughed. 'Not myself, and not Spencer. Who else is there from next year's Sixth?'

'Warner?'

'He's the only one. And he has more or less a habit of getting what he goes after.'

'That would be quite a mistake, I think.'

'It would. But Crane would never lift a finger to win a vote. Too shy and too proud.'

Henry was interested in hearing Wyeth's views, so different from those that he would have expected a team-mate of Warner's to hold; but he was too new a member of the board to feel that the election of next year's editor-in-chief was a matter of immediate concern. What he was really impatient to do was to find Earle Castleman and let him know that his story was to be printed in the next number. So he hastened from the Upper School, where the meeting had been held, to Earle's room. Earle was bent over his desk, with books open before him, so absorbed in his studies that he was unaware of his friend's entrance.

'Writing another story, Earle?' Henry said, and Earle looked up with a start.

'No. Studying my history.'

'You must get to work on another story soon.

That one you turned in to the Mirror is going to be printed in the next number.'

'I don't much care.'

'Oh, yes, you do. They talked about you and your work a good deal at the meeting to-day. Norman Crane thinks you're the most promising writer in the School. And I'd rather have his opinion than any one else's.'

'I suppose, then, the others were all against me.'

'No, not at all. There are a couple of fellows on the board who seem to think that literary talent is a secondary kind of qualification for an editor; they are more keen about getting fellows on who are — well, literary dubs like Butler and me. Now they're satisfied, I guess, and there will be a chance for the fellows with real talent. So I want you to get busy.'

'You've just been trying to persuade them.'

'No, honestly. Norman Crane's the fellow that did the talking. He thinks a lot of you. So I feel sure you'll be taken on first thing in the autumn — only to make certain you'd better fire another story in before the end of this term.'

'I don't believe I'll have time,' said Earle; but his tone had changed; he was obviously quite elated.

The next evening Henry glanced into Earle's room and saw him sitting with a pad of paper on

his knee, a pencil in his fingers, and a far-away look in his eyes.

'Genius burning?' said Henry.

'Not yet,' said Earle.

'Give it time; give it time.' And Henry withdrew softly, respectfully, to his room.

X

'NOTHING DOING'

WHILE Earle was laboring on his third contribution for the Mirror, Henry was mainly occupied, outside of study hours, with rowing. On the trips in the bus to and from the pond his acquaintance with Hugh Warner made rapid progress; Warner seemed to have taken a liking to him and usually sat next to him, sometimes roughly though good-naturedly crowding out some other fellow who happened to have slipped into that place. Such attention as he showed Henry was of course flattering, for Warner was looked upon as sure to be one of the leaders of the School the next year. He was the stroke oar on the first Pythian crew, had played halfback on the first Pythian team, was a reasonably good student, had energy and force, and never hesitated to take the initiative when he felt it was desirable to do so. Finding that Warner was so well disposed towards him, Henry thought he might say a word to him on behalf of Earle; he told him one day, when their talk had turned, as it often seemed to do, to the subject of the Mirror, that he had got Castleman started writing again.

'Fine!' exclaimed Warner heartily. 'That's the stuff! Next year he'll be about ripe to be taken on the board. I think we're going to get out a good paper next year — with you and Norman and myself mostly running it.'

'Not me, I guess,' said Henry.

'Oh, yes, you'll have a lot to say; you're the executive kind of fellow. That's what an editor has to be mostly — executive. Able to get other fellows to write for him. It's not so important that he should be able to write himself. Look at the way you've got Castleman started. I've been doing something of the same sort with George Mason. Do you know George well?'

'Not particularly.' Henry knew, however, that Mason was the crack hockey player of the Fifth Form, a good athlete, and one of Warner's close friends.

'You don't think of George as literary, but he has a good mind — he can write. Only, he needs to be pushed into it. I've got a first-rate story out of him; we can run it in this next number.'

'I thought the last number of the year would be filled up, with the accounts of the races and track and Anniversary and with Castleman's story.'

'No, I've talked with Barrett about it and he's going to make a place for Mason's story.

Mason will be a great fellow to have on the board next year, and we don't want to lose any time running his things in, so that he can be elected as soon as possible. You'll like him; he's just your sort.'

Henry felt somewhat apprehensive; had Warner prevailed on Barrett to substitute Mason's story in the forthcoming issue of the Mirror for Earle's? He was reassured a day or two later when Earle showed him the proof of his contribution that he had been correcting.

'It doesn't read so well as I had hoped it would,' Earle said.

'Never mind; it will read better than anything else in the number,' said Henry.

It was impossible for Henry to avoid suspecting that Hugh Warner had an ulterior motive in favoring him with so much attention and in talking with him so often about the Mirror. One day at the pond, after the second Pythian crew had come in from their practice and had stowed their shell in the boathouse, Ralph Butler joined Henry, who was standing in the doorway watching the first crew sweeping down the lake.

'Pretty smooth, aren't they?' said Butler.

'They certainly are. Smoother than the Corinthians, I think.'

'Yes, the Corinthians have no such stroke as Hugh Warner. He's a great fellow. I wonder

if he'll be editor-in-chief of the Mirror next year.'

'I shouldn't think he'd want to be. He's in so many other things. I suppose he'll be captain of next year's Pythian crew.'

'He's sure of that. But that wouldn't make him any less desirable as editor-in-chief of the Mirror.'

'He might not be so much interested in the Mirror as if he didn't have so many other interests.'

'Oh, he'll be interested; don't worry. He'd be a great editor-in-chief.'

Henry felt it unnecessary to say that he thought Norman Crane would be a better one; he would reserve that opinion until it should be necessary to act upon it.

The occasion came a few days after the boat-races. As a result of them, Hugh Warner's prestige in the School was at its zenith. He had stroked the Pythian first crew to victory in a magnificent race, reserving the final spurt until the last quarter of a mile, and then putting pressure on the seven fellows behind him and driving them while they responded gallantly. Their shell swept across the finish line a length in advance of the Corinthian craft, which had held abreast of them all the way down the course until the last few seconds of the race. Defeat in

most of the earlier races had been the portion of the Pythians; laboring with all his strength in the waist of the second-crew boat, while the sweat streamed down his face and his heart pounded and his lungs heaved, Henry had undergone the disappointment of seeing that his efforts and those of his fellow oarsmen, who like himself were spending all their power, were in vain. He had felt crushed as well as exhausted while he sat huddled over, resting on his oar, at the end of the race, and heard the exultant Corinthian cheer sounding from the hillside. But a few minutes later on the veranda of the boat-house he was leaping about and waving his arms and shouting as wildly as all the other Pythians, whose gloom over the series of minor defeats was swept away in rejoicing over the winning of the first-crew race.

Hugh Warner and the seven other members of the victorious Pythian crew were the heroes of the School that evening. And a week later, as stroke of the St. Timothy's crew that won by less than a length the annual race with St. John's, Warner was a School hero again — second only to Ogden, the captain, whose oar lashed to the St. Timothy's flag was hauled to the top of the flagpole in front of the Study building, while four hundred St. Timothy's boys cheered captain and crew.

So when Barrett called the editors of the Mirror together to elect his successor in office, Hugh Warner had somewhat the air of trailing clouds of glory as he came. Already he had been chosen captain of the Pythian crew for the ensuing year; he took the most comfortable seat in Barrett's room with a cheerful and benignant air. Henry, Butler, and Spencer were crowded together on a window-seat, Norman Crane and Wyeth and Talbot sat on the bed, Ford on a straight-backed chair, and Barrett himself behind his desk. Talbot and Ford were Sixth-Formers.

'I guess we're all here,' said Barrett. 'The business is to elect an editor-in-chief for next year. Nominations are in order.'

After a brief pause Spencer spoke up and nominated Norman Crane. There was another brief pause; then Barrett said, 'I should like to nominate Hugh Warner.'

There were no other nominations; Barrett passed slips of paper round for ballots, and each person wrote on his slip the name of his candidate. Barrett collected the ballots, counted them, and announced the result.

'Six votes for Crane, three for Warner. Crane is elected.'

Barrett stepped forward and shook hands with the successful candidate, Warner with no

show of disappointment or mortification stood up and did the same, and then the others followed.

'We've got a good chief for next year,' said Warner. 'I'm satisfied.'

'I can do a good job only if you fellows all give me your help,' said Crane.

In an atmosphere of such good feeling and perfect reconciliation the meeting broke up.

But during the two weeks that remained of the School year Henry observed that the extreme friendliness of Warner's demeanor towards him which had marked so pleasantly their intercourse during the rowing season had ceased and that his manner when they met was now cool and distant. In spite of this discovery, in spite too of the examinations which raised their forbidding heads, the June days of the closing term seemed to him the best days of the School year. Not only because now they were the forerunners of the long vacation and the return home, to which he looked forward with daily increasing eagerness; but also because, freed from the restraint and grinding routine of organized competition in sports — which he liked immensely for a while and then sickened of — he was free to spend his afternoons playing tennis or canoeing or swimming in the company of the fellows that he most liked to be with.

Once again it was Reed and Dinsmore and Castleman that were his closest associates, Reed and Dinsmore on the tennis courts and on the ball field whenever a scrub baseball game was organized, Earle Castleman with the others at the swimming hole when they hastened there after their tennis or baseball was done. To his surprise he found that in the water Earle was as much at home as any one; when he commented on that fact Earle disparaged the accomplishment.

'Of course any fellow who's been brought up by the water all his life can swim,' he said.

Two days before the end of the year the last number of the Mirror appeared, containing Earle's story and the one by George Mason of which Warner had spoken to Henry. Not only Henry but also Dinsmore and Reed pronounced Earle's story the better of the two; on the other hand, Hugh Warner circulated about among the members of the Fifth Form exuberantly commending to their attention the new genius that he had discovered, and by his enthusiastic advertising of the first story that one who was generally liked for his good nature and admired for his prowess in athletics had produced, he established George Mason's literary reputation among the large body of his followers and nourished the budding ambition in Mason's breast.

Although it vexed Henry that the superior merit of Earle's work was overlooked and Mason's mediocre effort received with acclaim by the undiscerning, easily led public, Warner's activity on behalf of the new contributor gave him no real concern; it could not affect Earle's prospects of election to the editorial board in the autumn.

'But you mustn't get lazy, Earle,' Henry admonished his candidate. 'How's that new story that you were writing coming on?'

'Not at all. I couldn't make it go to suit me, and I've given it up.'

'You shouldn't have done that. Get to work on it again and finish it before the end of the term.'

Earle shook his head. 'No, the thing was no good. If I get another idea, I'll try.'

'Anyway you must write something during the vacation — so that in the fall there ought to be no question about your being elected.'

The period of final examinations compelled most of the fellows to put aside all thought of outside activities. Earle Castleman, who ranked among the leaders of the Form, had no apprehensions, of course; Henry, whose work on his studies had always been satisfactory, looked on the examinations merely as a chore; but Sam Reed was afflicted with nervousness at the mere

thought of them, and to Dan Dinsmore they were a nightmare. Dinsmore's panic excited Earle's sympathy; he did what he could in the evenings preceding the examination to coach the terrified youth for the impending ordeal; he translated pages of Cicero for him and helped him with problems in algebra, and felt no resentment, only pity, one day when Dinsmore came in after the Latin examination in which he was sure he had done poorly and crashed down on Earle's neatly made bed in utter discouragement, exclaiming, 'Gosh, Earle, you don't know what it is to be a dumb-bell!'

The morning that the examination in American History was to take place Dinsmore joined Henry at the door of the examination room. American History was one of Henry's best subjects; it was one in which Dinsmore's memory was constantly betraying him.

'My head's just a jumble of dates and facts,' said Dinsmore as he and Henry entered the examination room together. He looked pale and worried. 'Tell me, Henry, when was the Missouri Compromise?'

'1820.'

'I'm sure we'll have that; glad I thought to ask you. Let's sit here.'

Dinsmore saw Henry take the seat on the aisle that he had pointed out; then he took the

seat immediately behind him. As a precautionary measure, in order that no one might get or give surreptitious help, the seats were so arranged that there was a vacant place on either side of each student.

The bell rang, the class was assembled, Mr. Gray, the master in charge, stepped down from the platform and began to distribute the examination papers and blue books. At this preliminary, Dinsmore's morale crumbled. He whispered desperately to Henry while Mr. Gray was still in a distant part of the room: 'Henry, you might lean back and read your book over once in a while — hold it up to read. You know.'

Henry gave no indication that he had heard, and in another moment it was too late for Dinsmore to repeat the suggestion. He and Henry received their papers and blue books and bent to their task.

For Henry it seemed to be easy enough; he wrote steadily with hardly a pause. Dinsmore, hesitating over the answers, glanced at him at intervals with envy and irritation. The time passed; Dinsmore wrote intermittently, writhed about in his chair and clutched his hair and tried to drag up the truth of history from the bottomless well of his intellect, but it seemed as if only shreds and patches were all that he could lay hold of. Henry completed his work some

minutes before the hour at which the examination was to close; Dinsmore observed that he had ceased to write and was turning the pages of his blue book, reviewing his work. Driven by despair, Dinsmore leaned forward and shielding his mouth with his hand intimated his plight and his desire in a cautious whisper: 'Henry! Help! Help!'

Henry heard and understood. He turned to the blank page at the end of his blue book, wrote two words on it in large letters, and then leaned back and elevated his book in air. Dinsmore, gazing with eagerness to grasp whatever information a fleeting glimpse might afford, saw only the two words, 'Nothing Doing.'

Henry put his book down on the desk, carefully tore out the page that he had thus inscribed, and, crumpling it up, thrust it into his pocket. Then he rose and taking the book to the master's desk at the farther end of the room, delivered it into Mr. Gray's hands.

He felt depressed as he walked to the dormitory; Dinsmore in his extremity must have thought him cruel to deny his appeal for help. It was a miserable episode on which to end the year; and he supposed it would affect the friendship that had grown up so pleasantly between him and Dinsmore after their early estrangement. Dinsmore would probably come to him

in anger and express bitter scorn for his priggish righteousness; he was sure that he hadn't been priggish to act as he had done, but he could hardly blame Dinsmore if he was of a different opinion.

He waited in his room until the lunch hour, wondering if Dinsmore would come, and then he walked to the dining-hall, reluctant for the meeting with him there. Dinsmore avoided his eye at the table and was more subdued than usual; he did not join Reed in putting eager inquiries to Earle and Henry concerning their answers to questions on the examination paper, but listened with a gloomy look on his face.

'I guess I flunked,' he remarked finally, after the examination had been discussed. 'Seems as if I got hardly anything right.'

'You'll probably find you pulled through,' said Reed, who was quite jubilant at having apparently got nearly everything right.

After lunch Henry returned to the dormitory to pack his trunk; he was to leave for California the next morning. But the joy of preparing for departure had vanished; he was heavy-hearted because Dinsmore seemed determined to avoid him. While he piled clothes into his trunk he considered whether he should go to Dinsmore. Could he do it without making matters worse?

It was a warm June afternoon; he had taken off his coat; soon he removed his collar and necktie; next he stripped to his undershirt. The air outdoors was still; though the windows and door of his room were open no alleviating breeze swept through; the sunlight beat in on the varnished surfaces of desk and chairs and made the heat of the little room almost intolerable. For the sake of a few moments' relief and amusement, Henry dropped his work from time to time and looked in on other fellows who were likewise packing their trunks and complaining of the heat.

'I'm going for a swim as soon as I get this job done,' said Reed, who as far as attire was concerned was quite ready for a swim at the moment.

'Yes, it will be pretty good,' said Henry. 'Where's Dinsmore? He hasn't started packing yet.'

'I don't know. Loafing in some guy's room, I suppose — like you.'

'It's lucky for you there's no inspection of packing a trunk the way there is of bed-making. You'd never be allowed to go home.'

Reed replied that it was really too hot to scrap, and Henry after making one or two more comments returned to his room.

He had nearly completed his packing when

Dinsmore came down the corridor and stopped in the doorway.

'All packed, aren't you?'

He stepped inside, closed the door, and stood with his back against it.

'I know I shouldn't have asked you for help,' he said in a tone in which apology and defiance were blended. 'Why wouldn't you give it? You wouldn't have been cribbing or cheating.'

'I'd have been an accessory,' said Henry. Then on a sudden impulse he grinned and said, 'You're not handicapped as I am, Dan. I can't afford to do anything that will make my name even more of a joke than it is. — Do you want some help with your packing? I'm about through.'

'No, thanks.' Dinsmore opened the door. 'Unless you want to come in and keep me company.'

'Sure,' said Henry. 'And then we'll go for a swim.'

That evening in the great study hall where the whole School was assembled for the Last Night exercises, Henry sat with Dinsmore and Reed and Castleman and felt there was no flaw in his happiness. He was not one of those whose names were read out by the headmaster as winners of prizes or honors, but having no expectations he suffered no disappointment. And he

would be going home the next morning without a cloud on the friendships that had become dear to him and that would be renewed joyfully in the fall.

XI

THE DEADLOCK

In the last stages of Henry's journey east in September, he was almost as eager and excited as he had been three months earlier when on the homeward trip the train had been descending the western slope of the Sierras and he had known he would see his mother and father in a few hours. Leaving the family had been hard, but the prospect of soon meeting his friends again was exhilarating. And the separation from his mother and father was not to be for so long a time as previously; they had decided that he must come back to them for Christmas and again for the two weeks' vacation in the spring.

A letter from Dinsmore had reached him while he was on a camping trip in the mountains. 'I got my marks yesterday,' Dinsmore wrote, 'and, oh, Boy! I just squeaked through in History! So thank you again for "Nothing Doing." I got by in all my other subjects too. Don't be astonished if I beat you out in all our classes this next year.' Sam Reed had written that he had been winning some races at Marblehead with his new boat, and that if Henry would only come there for the summer he might learn as much about

sailing as he had learned about skating in Boston in the winter. From Earle Castleman, too, he had heard; Earle was spending the summer as usual at his family's place on Long Island, reading, going to parties, loafing; a note of discontent was discernible.

It was pleasant for Henry on his return to St. Timothy's to find that his friends were as glad to see him again as he was to see them; he was surprised and gratified by the warm welcome given him by some fellows whom he had not thought likely to greet him with enthusiasm; Hugh Warner, for instance, was as hearty and genial in his manner as if nothing had occurred to interrupt the intimacy that had seemed for a time to be developing between them; and George Mason, with whom Henry had supposed he had but a slight acquaintance, shook hands with him most cordially, expressed the hope that he had had a good summer, and asked him where he had spent it. Within a week of the opening of the autumn term the editors of the Mirror held their first meeting in Hugh Warner's room. Norman Crane presided nominally, but Hugh in his capacity of host virtually took the direction of the meeting out of Norman's hands, first with an explanation that as his room was more centrally situated and larger than Norman's he had offered it for the use of

the board and would be glad to have all the meetings held in it, and then by constantly prompting Norman and offering suggestions about the matters to be discussed and the policy to be pursued. Henry was somewhat disappointed to observe that Norman, who on a former occasion had displayed the ability to assert himself, submitted to this usurpation of authority.

'Now,' said Hugh. 'I suppose the most important thing we have to discuss to-day is how we're going to fill the opening number — isn't it, Norman?'

'Yes, that's it,' said Norman.

'Probably you've come back with a barrel of manuscripts, and none of us will have to do anything. But if you haven't, I've got a couple of stories that George Mason wrote during the vacation that are mighty good. And Mr. Libby told me that Bonner in your Form, Henry, has shown a lot of talent in his writing in the English class, and I've been after him to do some work for us. Has anybody else got anything?'

Norman Crane admitted that he had written an essay during the summer that could be used, but that since coming back to the School he had not yet taken any measures to stir up contributions; he asked Henry if Earle Castleman hadn't

a manuscript for the opening number. Henry had to answer that Earle had done no writing during the vacation.

'We're all right anyway,' said Hugh. 'With your essay, Norman, and one of Mason's stories, and something of Bonner's — he's quite keen to write for the Mirror and he's promised to give me a story in a couple of days — we'll have enough, along with the regular news articles and editorials. Isn't that right, Norman?'

'It looks so,' Norman answered. 'But I wish if anybody here has any ideas for stories or articles they'd get busy on them at once, for after all Bonner's stuff may not turn out good for much. — Have you got those stories of Mason's with you, Hugh?'

'Yes, here they are.' Hugh produced the manuscripts from a drawer in his desk. 'I'm sure you'll find them all right — very amusing, I thought. George has a great sense of humor.'

'If that's so, you might read them to us,' said Wyeth.

'Yes, go to it, Norman,' said Hugh.

Crane began to read. At intervals Hugh found the story so amusing that he broke into laughter; Butler echoed his laugh, and Wyeth smiled feebly. Wyeth was a friend of George Mason's, but he could not avoid thinking that George's attempts at humor were rather flat.

As for the other listeners and the reader himself, they betrayed no signs of mirthful enjoyment.

'I suppose,' said Norman when he had finished reading, 'if we can't get better things for the first number this will have to go in. But I don't think it's very funny.'

'You don't!' exclaimed Hugh. 'I think it's a scream. I guess something's happened to your sense of humor, Norman.'

The editor-in-chief ignored this irritating remark and turned to Henry.

'I wish you'd get Castleman started on something for us,' he said. 'With Castleman and you and a few others turning manuscripts in, we wouldn't have to print stuff like this.'

'Oh, you're prejudiced!' said Hugh.

'Is Mason's other story any better than the one we've just heard?' asked Spencer.

'Any better?' Hugh turned a black look on Spencer, who was usually so mousy and self-effacing. 'It's just as good, and that's saying enough for it. I'm in favor of printing these two stories just as soon as we can and then taking George Mason on the board.'

'I think that would be fine,' said Butler.

'I'm in favor of taking the best writers on the board, when they've done enough work to qualify,' said Norman. 'Now Castleman's done

enough, and there's no comparison between him and Mason —'

'No,' interrupted Hugh, 'Mason's active and a fellow that's always doing something for the School, and Castleman's a dead one. Besides, this is Mason's last year; he ought to be recognized.'

'Why can't we elect both him and Castleman?' asked Henry.

'Then you'll fill right off the only two vacancies, and you'll have no place for talent that may be discovered during the year,' said Hugh. 'There's Bonner in your Form; he'll come along fast as a writer; see if he doesn't. And there will be one or two others most likely from the Fifth — not to mention the possibilities in the Fourth. I think we ought to elect only one new editor this term.'

'I quite agree,' said Norman.

Hugh looked at Norman sharply; he did not like the quiet tone in which Norman had spoken.

'Well then,' said Hugh, 'why shouldn't we elect George Mason now? We've published one story of his and we've accepted two more for publication; he's turned in more stuff and better stuff, in my opinion, than any other candidate. I say we take him in.'

'I'm opposed to taking him in now,' said Norman. 'I like him, and I should like to see

him elected later if there's no one better. But we should first elect the best man, and that is Castleman.'

'Suppose we take a vote on it,' said Hugh. 'Just a trial ballot, to see which one most of us favor.'

'All right. Those in favor of Mason rather than Castleman raise their hands.'

Hugh, Butler, and to Henry's disappointment Wyeth, after a moment of hesitation, raised their hands.

'Those in favor of Castleman rather than Mason.'

Henry, Spencer, and Norman raised their hands.

'It seems to be a tie,' said Norman.

'I think there's something in Henry's idea that we should elect both of them,' said Wyeth.

'I'm willing we should take Castleman on some time if he turns in enough good stuff,' said Hugh. 'But I want to see Mason taken on first. He's written more for the Mirror, he's more of a fellow, he has more of a claim.'

'There's a difference of opinion about that,' said Norman. 'So far as I'm concerned, if there's only one candidate to be elected now — and in that I'm with Hugh — it must be Castleman.'

There was a moment of silence. Then Hugh

suggested, 'We might take a ballot to see if any one will change his mind and break the deadlock.'

The ballot was taken; the vote was three and three, as before.

'There can be no election to-day, that's certain,' said Norman. 'If there's nothing else to discuss, we might as well adjourn the meeting.'

'All right,' said Hugh cheerfully. 'We'll probably be able to come to an agreement before long. We'll have our next meeting here, if you like — all our meetings here; I'm glad to have you make use of the room.'

Henry descended the dormitory stairs with Wyeth.

'I thought from the way you talked last spring that you would be in favor of Castleman rather than Mason,' he said.

'Things have changed a little since then.' Wyeth was evidently somewhat embarrassed. 'You see, Mason has turned in more contributions now. And this is his last year, and he's quite keen to be taken on — and he's always been quite a friend of mine; I shouldn't feel quite right if I voted against him.'

Henry made no comment; he thought that Wyeth felt his explanation was lame and that he knew it was a somewhat perverted sense of loyalty that had influenced him. There was

some hope therefore that later he might shift over to Castleman's side — especially if the excuse that Mason's offerings had been more numerous than Castleman's could no longer be made. The first thing to be done, then, was to stimulate Earle to renewed literary activity.

'You've got to do something,' Henry said to him. 'And when you write so well it ought to be a pleasure to you to do it. Besides, you mustn't disappoint me, Earle; I've been bragging that next year you'll be the bright literary light of the School.'

Although he knew that he had made an impression on Earle, he did not rely entirely on his own power of persuasion. He talked to Sam Reed and Dan Dinsmore of the importance not only to Earle but also to the Mirror and in fact to the School of reawakening his desire to write, which seemed unfortunately to have lapsed; they good-naturedly consented to second Henry's efforts, and they even carried out the plan so skillfully as not to arouse any suspicion in Earle's mind that they had been prompted to it. Reed asked him one day if he wasn't writing something more for the Mirror, added that the stories in the opening number had been rotten, and that a fellow who could write better things than those that were printed had a duty to do it. A few days later, Dan Dinsmore, who had

dropped in to Earle's room to receive a little help with his Latin, remarked as he was on the point of departing that he hoped Earle had something coming out in the next Mirror; the last number had been too dull to read. Such gratifying and surprising displays of interest were not without effect; Earle set himself again to the task of literary composition and with a greater zeal than before.

Then the football season opened, and Henry and Reed and Dinsmore, Warner and Butler and Mason, all concentrated their thoughts in their spare time on football plays and strategy, or so they seemed to do. Perhaps Warner and Mason were not unmindful of the opportunities that football gave them to break down Henry's resistance to their efforts in the field of editorial politics. Both of them played with him and Reed on the first Pythian eleven; both of them showed a friendly and coöperative spirit. In the final and decisive game with the Corinthians, the Pythians were nervous at the start; as a result of their fumbling and poor team play the Corinthians scored a touchdown. But when next the Pythians got possession of the ball the tide turned. Henry, who had been taken out of the line this year and put in at halfback, made a run of fifteen yards. Hugh Warner helped him to his feet, clapped him on the back, and cried,

'Oh, Noble!' Then, as the members of the team were hurrying to their places he shouted, 'Everybody do noble, like Henry! Do noble things, fellows, not dream them all day long!'

Such cheerful, jocular encouragement was what the momentarily demoralized team needed. They laughed and went into the next play with a dash and confidence that they maintained throughout the game. They tied the score, and after the Corinthians had again taken the lead they tied it again; and finally they won the game with a goal from the field that Warner kicked in the last five minutes of play. Warner was the hero of the game, but he was modest in victory.

'That name of yours gave me the inspiration,' Warner said to Henry. 'If there hadn't been something to steady our fellows when they were panicky, we might never have got the lead.'

'My name is my fortune, I guess,' said Henry. He fingered his lip which was cut and swollen. 'It's a sure thing my face isn't.'

He elaborated on Hugh Warner's happy inspiration; he adopted the line from Kingsley's poem as his motto to the extent of writing it out and pasting it on the top of his desk and also lettering it handsomely on a piece of cardboard and tacking the placard up on the wall of his room. To amused visitors he explained that 'Do noble things, not dream them all day long,'

could be read in this way: 'Do, Noble, things, not dream them,' and that thus it became a personal exhortation to him to lead an active, practical life.

'After all,' said Henry, 'what was the poet thinking of? Nobody can do noble things all day long. A fellow's lucky if he gets two or three chances in a lifetime.'

'Yes, poets write a good deal of bunk,' said Reed. 'High-sounding stuff that doesn't mean much. And speaking of poets, that's quite a nice bit of verse that Castleman has in the new Mirror.'

'I liked it,' said Henry.

'Getting a poem and a story into the same number — you fellows will be taking him on the board now, won't you?'

'I should think we ought to.'

'I don't want to butt into things that are none of my concern. But why Butler's an editor and he isn't, is more than I can see.'

'I guess I can't talk about it.'

'No, I suppose not. But it makes me sort of tired the way our friend Hugh Warner goes round talking up George Mason as a literary man. George is a good fellow and a crack athlete, but I'm not going to be kidded into thinking he's a genius with the pen.'

'He doesn't think he is himself.'

'No, but he's perfectly willing to let others be kidded along, if only it will get him somewhere.'

'There's one thing I'm glad to see,' said Henry. 'Earle's going on with his writing for the Mirror, whether it gets him anywhere or not. He keeps right on trying, doing the best he can.'

'He's turning into quite a fellow — only he won't believe it himself,' said Reed.

XII

BREAKING THE DEADLOCK

THE football season had been over less than a week when there came on a storm that in one night covered the ground with nearly a foot of snow. Two days later the sun shone bright, the south wind blew warm, there was a merry drip from eaves and cornices. In the middle of the afternoon, Norman Crane with unbuckled arctics flopping at his ankles made his way along the slushy path that led from the Infirmary past the Study building to the Upper School. He had been visiting a friend who was housed on account of a cold; now he was on his way to attend a meeting of the editors of the Mirror in Hugh Warner's room.

A group of fellows who were gathered near the Study were throwing snowballs at a fence post on the other side of the road. Norman, approaching, knew that they would much prefer to have a human target.

Even as he was buttoning up his coat by way of preparation he saw a fellow emerge from the Study and flee up the road towards him. From the loiterers rose a yell of execration, and instantly a shower of snowballs pursued the fugi-

tive. One caught him in the back, one in the leg, vigorous thwacks both, and the yell of execration was followed by a cheer. Norman expected to see the fellow stop and hurl at least one snowball in an effort to retaliate. But the victim sped on without slackening his pace, even after he was out of range; and from the group of snowballers rose derisive laughter.

'Hello, Castleman,' Norman said, as the runner stopped, panting, before him. 'Winged you, did they? Sting you much?'

'No, it was nothing. I don't know why I ran so.' Earle seemed both ashamed and defiant. He wished that the editor-in-chief of the Mirror had not seen him run.

'That was another good story you handed in yesterday,' said Norman. 'You have quite a touch.'

He did not add that he had the manuscript in his pocket and was on his way to attend a meeting of the editorial board. He saw that Castleman's face had brightened at his word of appreciation, and he passed on with a friendlier feeling than before for the candidate.

The gang in front of the Study held their fire while he approached and busied themselves in adding to their store of ammunition.

'Another literary fellow,' observed Dan Dinsmore, ostentatiously moulding a snowball.

'They're always easy marks,' said Tom Holmes.

Holmes nursed a pair of hard-packed snowballs in the crook of his left arm and poised a third significantly in his right hand. He was the pitcher on the St. Timothy's baseball nine. Each of the other fellows had a snowball in each hand and stood over a pile of bluish-looking missiles.

Tom Holmes addressed Norman in a pleasant, conversational tone. 'Going to do a little editing?' he asked.

'Yes,' Norman answered.

'So are we,' said Holmes, and the others guffawed.

Norman walked on in a leisurely, dignified manner. They allowed him a distance of fifty feet; then snowballs began to whiz; one struck him in the neck a stinging blow, to the loud rejoicing of his assailants, another thumped hard upon his shoulder, and a third spatted viciously against the calf of his right leg just above the flopping arctic. He grabbed up a double handful of snow and turned, dodged three line throws, grunted as a fourth shot took him in the chest, and then hurled his own snowball in reply. It hit Tom Holmes in the ear as he was bending over his ammunition dump. Holmes straightened up with a howl and let fly furiously but wildly.

'Well edited, what?' shouted Norman, and he continued on his way, quite satisfied. He had never cut much of a figure in athletics; it was particularly pleasing to have scored on a renowned baseball player. The excitement of the brief action had stirred his blood; he arrived at Hugh Warner's room in a glow of confidence and determination that was for him rather unusual. The other members of the board were already present. Hugh greeted him with the customary exuberance that irritated Norman and that at the same time awakened in him a certain envy.

'Hello, Norman, glad you're here. Ralph, you lazy galoot, get out of the armchair; that's reserved for the chief.' With one powerful hand Hugh pulled Ralph Butler out of the comfortable chair in which he had been sprawling, and with the other he pushed Norman into it. 'Now, Chief, shall we get down to business?'

Norman was determined to show that he needed no prompting.

'The meeting will come to order,' he said. 'The secretary will read the minutes of the last meeting.'

John Spencer performed the task in a perfunctory manner; Norman announced that the minutes were accepted, and called for the report of the treasurer. Ralph Butler presented the figures; all the boys in the School had subscribed

except nine, and all except twenty of those who had subscribed had paid their subscriptions.

'What's the matter with those twenty?' demanded Hugh. 'If you have trouble collecting, turn them over to me; I'll get the money out of them.'

'They'll all pay,' said Ralph. 'They're strapped just now, but they've promised to come through as soon as they get their next allowance.'

'Let me know if they don't,' said Hugh. 'Well, Chief, what's next?'

'Consideration of manuscripts. Since the last meeting I've received half a dozen manuscripts that aren't up to the standard — mostly from fellows in the Fourth Form. Does any one want to look over them?' He drew a bundle of papers from his pocket.

'No, life's too short,' said Hugh. 'We all take your word for it.'

'Then if there's no objection, the chair will return the unavailable manuscripts,' said Norman. Hugh blinked at him; it was a novelty for the editor-in-chief to conduct a meeting in such parliamentary fashion. 'Now I have four manuscripts that seem to me worth using. Shall I read them, or just tell you something about them?'

'We'll probably be satisfied just to hear about them,' said Hugh.

'There's a poem on skating by Bonner of the Fifth — quite a swing to it.'

'I told you that boy was a comer,' interposed Hugh complacently.

'There's a ghost story by young Dawson of the Fourth. It's rather crude, and ghost stories are pretty stale, but this is more amusing than weird. If you fellows would turn in some copy yourselves, we shouldn't need to keep Dawson's story; but with the exception of Spencer and myself, it doesn't look as if this board would be represented.'

'I don't see why some of you fellows don't get busy,' said Hugh. There was a laugh. 'If you don't, some time Norman and I may have to write the whole issue. Well, Mr. Chairman, I guess that on account of the laziness of our fellow members we'll have to let young What's-his-name's ghost story get by. What else have you?'

'There's an essay that I suppose we shall have to let get by for the same reason. By George Mason, on Cortez and the Conquest of Mexico.'

'Oh, that's a good piece of work. George read me some of it. You'll find when it's in print, Norman, it's a whole lot better than you think.'

'I doubt it. It's the kind of thing a fellow gets up with the aid of an encyclopedia and no mental effort. But I suppose it will do. The other thing

that I have is another ripping good story by Earle Castleman. I think it's time we elected him a member.'

'I don't altogether agree with you.' Hugh Warner rose and stood imposingly with his back against the mantelpiece. 'It's just as I said before; Castleman can afford to wait, being only in the Fifth; Mason, being in the Sixth, has the real claim to be elected.'

'There's a good deal in what Hugh says,' Wyeth remarked. 'George Mason has done a lot for both the School and the Mirror, and Castleman has only done a lot for the Mirror. I think it would be the right thing to elect George now and let Castleman wait.'

'It seems to me very unfair to go on using Castleman's stuff without electing him,' said Henry. 'I don't object to electing Mason too, but I think Castleman has certainly earned a place on the board.'

'We're limited to eight members from the two upper forms,' said Hugh. 'So we have only two vacancies, one of which at least ought to be kept in reserve for a while. I think it would be a mistake to fill both at once. Much better to leave one open, and make absolutely sure we've got the best man for it before we fill it.'

'Are you all ready to vote on these two candidates?' asked Norman. 'Mason's name was

the first proposed; we will ballot on Mason first. Election has to be by unanimous vote; a single blackball means defeat.'

Each of the editors recorded his vote on a slip of paper and handed it to Norman.

'Three for, three against,' Norman said. 'Mason is not elected. Now we will ballot on Castleman.'

A few moments later he announced the result. 'Four for, two against. Castleman's made a gain of one vote since last time. Perhaps those who oppose his election might like to reconsider their votes. Shall we take another ballot on Castleman?'

There being no objection, a second ballot was taken. It resulted in no change.

'I don't want to be obstinate,' said Hugh Warner. 'If it's the opinion of the meeting that both Mason and Castleman should be elected to membership together, I won't oppose it.'

A ballot with both names appearing on it was then taken; the vote was five in favor, one against.

'I'm not the fellow that's holding out,' said Hugh, glancing round in surprise and displeasure. 'Come on, now, whoever it is; let's put this thing through.'

'I voted against them,' said Norman. 'I shall go on doing so. I think Hugh was quite right

when he said we shouldn't fill both vacancies at once.'

'What's your idea then?' demanded Hugh irritably.

'I want to see the fellow that is qualified elected and the other place kept open until we find some one about whose qualifications there can't be any doubt.'

'All right,' said Hugh, and his face was flushed and his mouth was sullen. 'You take that position and you'll deadlock this board for the rest of the year. No one will be elected.'

'Probably not.' Norman, as he grew angry, acquired an icy calmness of manner. 'If I don't succeed in getting the right man on the board, I'll succeed in keeping the wrong man off.'

Other acrimonious remarks followed; the meeting broke up in an atmosphere of general ill-feeling. Henry walked to his room disappointed in Norman Crane and despondent about Earle Castleman's prospects. It seemed to him that Earle was being sacrificed as much on account of Norman's stubbornness as on account of Hugh's partisanship and prejudice; that he was the innocent victim of their mutual enmity.

As for Hugh Warner, he was quite unmeasured in his condemnation of Norman Crane and his rule or ruin policy, and in his anger he so far forgot his obligations as a member of the editorial

board as to give George Mason a complete and highly colored history of all that had taken place. George was much nettled and felt aggrieved; what had he ever done that Norman Crane should take such a violent and personal stand against him?

'Of course I'm not really literary,' he said. 'I shouldn't mind being shut out if others were shut out for the same reason. But I'm as literary as you or Butler or Wyeth.'

'Sure; and when I was willing to compromise, Crane wouldn't. There's one thing certain now; he'll never get his pet Castleman on while I'm in the School.'

'Oh,' said Mason, who was a good-natured fellow, 'you'd better just drop my name instead of spoiling things with a deadlock.'

'Not on your life,' said Hugh. 'When a fellow thinks he's as important as Crane does, he's got to be shown.'

Fortunately hockey now began to demand the greater share of Hugh Warner's and George Mason's attention. The weather had turned cold after the thaw, the ice was in good condition, and every afternoon Pythians and Corinthians held hockey practice on the rinks that were marked out on the frozen surface of the pond. Hugh and George were members of the first Pythian hockey team and looked forward eagerly

to the Saturday when they were to take part in the opening game with the Corinthians.

The game was played with reckless roughness on both sides; Mr. Libby, the umpire, was obliged to inflict penalties repeatedly. Pythians and Corinthians alike resorted freely to body-checking; players went down time and again in violent clashes. Evenly matched, the teams went into the last period with the score three to three; the spectators crowded round the sides of the rink, shivering as much with excitement as with cold. Hugh Warner received the puck on a long pass and rushed with it down the side; Dinsmore for the Corinthians swept in, Hugh tried to dodge: another Corinthian player crashed against him and went down with him. Hugh got up, rubbing his knee, and did not at once skate off briskly.

A few moments later George Mason collided with Jim Foster, the Corinthian captain; in the tumble George's forehead was cut open by one of his opponent's skates. The gash bled profusely: time was called while Mr. Libby bound a handkerchief round George's head. Almost at once the handkerchief was dyed crimson, but George flung himself more desperately than ever into the game. Two minutes before the end he made a brilliant run and shot the puck through the Corinthians' goal for the winning score.

Walking away from the game of which he had been an excited spectator, Norman Crane tried to overcome the feeling of admiration for George Mason that had forced itself upon him. The picture of George with his bloody bandaged head sweeping down the ice to his victorious attack still gripped his imagination.

Wyeth joined Norman on the path to the Upper School. His emotions too were still vibrating to the note of enthusiasm that the cheers for George's triumphant performance had sounded. Moreover, he was eager to justify himself to one who, he knew, had been out of sympathy with the position that he had taken as an editor of the Mirror.

'Wasn't George Mason great!' he exclaimed. 'His head cut open and not giving a hoot — it was great! A fellow like that ought to get preference in things.'

'He's a grand hockey player,' Norman admitted. And though he said nothing more, he understood better than he had yet done why Warner and Wyeth had been so insistent on George's behalf.

The wounded hero lost nothing of the glamour that shone round his bloody head for Pythians and Corinthians alike when it became known that after the game he had visited the Infirmary and had five stitches taken in his wound. Among

those who sang his praises at supper that evening were Reed and Dinsmore and Henry and Earle.

'The great thing about George is, in any game, he always forgets all about himself,' Reed said.

'And never loses his head,' said Dinsmore.

'Not even when it's nearly knocked off by a skate or a hockey stick,' said Henry.

'I yelled so much I gave myself a sore throat,' said Earle.

Reed and Dinsmore looked at him in surprise.

'You're getting to be a regular fan on athletics,' said Dinsmore. 'Last year the only yelling you ever did was when I came and mussed up your bed for you.'

'You both of you have more sense now than you had then,' Henry remarked.

'It doesn't show much sense to yell so that you give yourself a sore throat,' said Earle.

After supper for the few minutes that he found himself alone with Henry, Earle let his friend understand what an impression George Mason had made on him.

'I've made myself sort of look down on him,' Earle confessed. 'Because I didn't think his stuff for the Mirror was much good, and I couldn't see why some fellows liked it; I decided he was just a fellow who was being advertised by his friends. But I feel differently about him now.'

'Why?'

'Because he has so much nerve and courage. I'd rather have that than anything else. I hate to say it, but I guess I have less of it than most fellows have. And now I know that George Mason has more of it than most.'

'You'd probably have done just what he did — if you'd been a good enough hockey player,' said Henry.

'I would not!' Earle shook his head. 'I know myself too well.'

The next morning when Hugh Warner and George Mason went together to the Infirmary, Hugh to have his injured knee examined, George to have the cut in his head inspected, they found Earle Castleman in the waiting room.

'Hello, Castleman,' said George. 'Not sick, are you?'

'No, just a sore throat that's to be sprayed.' Earle's eyes were warm with the glow of hero-worship. 'You're not much hurt, are you — either of you?' He added the last words in belated consideration for Hugh Warner.

'Nothing we won't get over,' said Mason.

'I wouldn't mind getting hurt if I could go on after it the way you did.'

'Darn clumsy to get hurt the way I did.'

'I didn't know you had any interest in sports, Castleman,' said Hugh.

'All I can do is look on,' Earle answered. 'That doesn't mean I shouldn't like to be able to do things.'

Mason spoke up quickly. 'But you can do things. Look at those Mirror articles of yours.'

Earle's response was a shrug of the shoulders.

The nurse appeared at the door.

'Who's first?' she asked.

'You go first,' Earle said to Mason. 'I can wait.'

'So can I,' said Mason. 'Trot along and get sprayed.'

After Earle had gone, the two friends were silent for a while.

Then Mason said: 'Hugh, I don't care much about being taken on the Mirror. Cut it out. Give the kid a chance.'

'Hold on, George; don't be foolish.' Hugh gazed at his friend imploringly.

'I'm not being foolish. I wouldn't feel right now about going on the Mirror — or making a deadlock that would keep him off. I want you to withdraw my name — at least until after Castleman's been elected.'

Therefore it happened that when the editors of the Mirror assembled for their next meeting Hugh Warner made an entirely unexpected speech.

'Norman,' he said, 'I believe now you had the

right idea about the election of a candidate. I know now that George Mason would refuse to be taken on the board ahead of a fellow who had done better work for the paper. So I am in favor of electing Earle Castleman, and I hope every one else will be too.'

There was no dissenting voice; without further delay Earle Castleman was elected a member of the board of editors.

'We've kept him waiting so long,' said Norman after the ballots had been counted, 'that instead of letting him get the announcement when the paper comes out, which has been the usual custom, I think we might notify him at once.'

As there was no objection to this proposal, Norman appointed Henry a committee of one to find Castleman and bring him in to the meeting.

Earle was at his desk, writing, when Henry appeared in the doorway of his room.

'I've come to take you for a walk, Earle,' said Henry.

'What's the idea?' asked Earle suspiciously.

'Never mind; you're to come along with me. Step lively now.'

Without any further question, Earle obeyed orders. He did not know what Henry's purpose was, but evidently he had one — and Henry was his friend.

'Turn in here,' said Henry when they had come to the entrance to the Upper School.

He escorted Earle up one flight of stairs and then opened the door to the right.

Earle, bewildered and embarrassed, found himself pushed into a room in which half a dozen fellows were sitting like judges ready to pronounce a sentence.

He stood awkwardly while Norman Crane rose and said, 'Castleman, you have been elected a member of the board of editors of the Mirror. We are glad to have you with us. You will not be permitted to make a speech or join us in our song. Now then —

"For he's a jolly good fellow,
Which nobody can deny."'

While they sang, Henry gave Earle a bat on the shoulder with one powerful hand and batted him upright again with the other powerful hand. After the song was ended Hugh Warner addressed to the new member the jocular remark that was always addressed to each newly elected member.

'Now that you've broken into the Mirror, Castleman, try not to break it.'

XIII

KNIGHT OF THE BATH

WITHIN a month after Earle Castleman had been elected an editor of the Mirror, George Mason was added to the staff, and Norman Crane and Hugh Warner each admitted that the protracted contention which had preceded the filling of the two places had been extremely childish. Henry had the satisfaction of seeing Earle set out with happy resolution to justify the honor that he had received, and of finding that now those who had so long opposed his election were generous in recognizing his talent. As the spring advanced and the opportunities for outdoor sports increased, the interest of the editors in literary activities waned somewhat; Earle alone could be counted on to supply material to fill space when the contributions from candidates fell short in quantity or quality, and at meetings of the board the editorial motto became, as Hugh Warner said, 'Let Earle do it!' So while Hugh Warner and Henry were rowing on the first Pythian crew and George Mason and Ralph Butler were practising baseball, and Norman Crane and Spencer were playing tennis, Earle would be likely to be scribbling at his desk and

not commiserating himself too much on his inability in athletics. His own experience made him kind to younger aspirants for literary honors; it was he that discovered the talent for droll and amusing comment that Donald Murray of the Fourth Form possessed and urged him to cultivate it for the benefit of the Mirror. And partly by reason of Earle's encouragement, though mainly on account of his own spontaneous actions, Donald Murray became noted during the last term of the School year as a humorist.

Sam Reed and Dan Dinsmore were hardly more than aware of Donald Murray's existence when they played the tennis game which indirectly led to their making the Fourth-Former's acquaintance. Good friends though they were, they never succeeded in playing tennis together without wrangling; and on this warm afternoon in the latter part of May each found the other more than ordinarily exasperating. In the third set when Dinsmore was leading, five games to four and forty-thirty, their irritation with each other found expression. Reed returned Dinsmore's serve hard to his backhand; Dinsmore played the ball quite brilliantly across court. The run that Reed had to make to reach it left him out of position, and Dinsmore, swinging on the slowly bounding ball, seemed to have the game in his hands. But he was overcautious; his

shot, well placed though it was for the corner, lacked speed, and Reed with a desperate effort reached the ball and with a reckless swing sent it skimming down the line and a foot inside.

'Good try! Hard luck!' exclaimed Dinsmore in his most complacent voice.

'Good try! Good-night! You don't think that was out, do you?'

'No, of course not. But you scooped it up on the second bounce.'

'I did not. I caught it clean just as it was about to strike the ground.'

'Oh, come off. It was a pick-up.'

'Pick-up, nothing! It was a clean shot, and the score is deuce.'

'We'd better play the point over.'

'We will not. I got the ball all right and I won the point.'

'All right. Cut out the talk and play ball. I'll concede the point.'

'I don't want concessions. I won the point; that's all there is to it.'

'Oh, play ball!' said Dinsmore with irritation.

He sent a slashing serve into the corner of Reed's court, and Reed was unable to reach the ball with his racquet.

'My vantage. You'll find it doesn't pay to get me annoyed,' remarked Dinsmore vainglori-ously, yet with humorous intention.

'Well, what do you think *I* am?' cried Reed.

'Licked,' said Dinsmore, grinning cheerfully, and he served again.

Reed returned the ball sharply and ran towards the net; Dinsmore sent a high lob, which Reed smashed far out of court.

'Six-four,' said Dinsmore, and beamed over his victory. 'Want to have another set, or are you satisfied with my taking two out of three?'

'I'm satisfied not to play another with you,' retorted Reed; he wiped his dripping face on his shirt-sleeve and thrust his racquet into its case.

'Don't be a grouch because you're licked; don't be a poor loser,' Dinsmore admonished him.

'It may be bad to be a poor loser, but it's worse to be a poor winner,' Reed answered.

Dinsmore laughed. 'I'm not a poor winner; I'm a mighty good winner. Nobody enjoys winning more than I do. I don't see what you're grouchy about — just because I give you a little jollying. You'll feel better after you've had a swim and got cooled off.'

Reed did not dispute this, but he was in no mood to assent to any suggestion that Dinsmore might offer, and he walked therefore in silence. Dinsmore, finding it impossible to engage him in conversation, expressed his cheerfulness by whistling, and Reed thought that Dinsmore's

whistling was sometimes the most annoying sound in the world.

When they arrived at the swimming hole, they found several of their classmates and a number of Fourth-Formers in the water and others preparing to enter it. Dinsmore, while he undressed, told Henry, who had just come from rowing, that he had licked Reed at tennis and that Reed didn't take kindly to being beaten.

'Whether I win or lose, a game's of no interest to me after it's over,' said Reed. 'It's different with Dan — always telling everybody how he won or why he got beaten.'

Dinsmore waved his hand mockingly, ran out on the springboard, and took a beautiful swan dive into the water.

'Of course,' remarked Henry, 'he *is* good at everything he does.'

'He's the best friend I've got,' said Reed, 'but every now and then I want to take him down a peg.'

A few moments later they were splashing about in the cool water. When at last they came out and sat on a bench sunning themselves, Dinsmore joined them.

'What do you suppose those birds are up to?' Henry asked.

Two canoes had been paddled out from shore; in the bow of each stood a fellow armed with a

paddle that had a large sponge attached to the end of it. The fellows sitting in the stern maneuvered the canoes into position so that the two who were standing could strike at each other with their weapons. The clash was brief; one thrust, and the stocky fellow in the red bathing-suit poled the long fellow in the blue bathing-suit clean overboard, and capsized his canoe.

The spectators laughed as the defeated contestants pushed their canoe ashore.

The victor held aloft his dripping weapon and shouted, 'Odds bodikins! What other saucy varlet would shiver a lance with me?'

The vanquished brandished his dripping weapon and shouted, 'By my halidome, I will take thee on for another joust; an I pitch thee not into the drink, never call me true knight more.'

He clambered again into his canoe; again there was a brief maneuvering, a brief clash, and again the long fellow went overboard.

'Jim Paulson isn't built low enough to play that game,' said Henry. 'The longer the legs, the poorer the balance.'

'Yes, and Ted Monroe is cleverer than Bill Warren at handling a canoe,' said Reed. 'Monroe and Murray make a good team.'

'If I weren't nearly dressed,' said Dinsmore,

'I'd take that fresh Fourth Form outfit on and spill them. They make me tired; they go round spouting their "Ivanhoe" foolishness all over the place till they've got other weak-minded idiots like Paulson imitating them. It would do them good if nobody ever noticed them. They're always playing to the grandstand.'

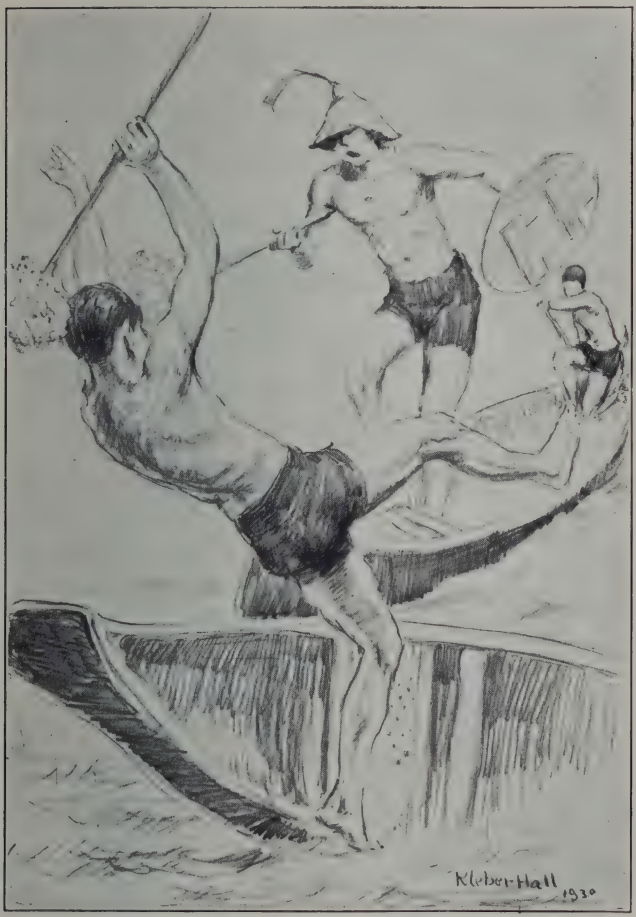
Reed's eyes twinkled. 'You're right. They're getting the idea they're the professional funny men of the School. No Fourth-Former ought to get that idea about himself.'

Nevertheless Reed lingered after his friends had departed, and while Murray and Paulson were dressing he congratulated them upon their stunt. They were pleased to have so eminent a Fifth-Former as Sam Reed pay them the compliment; they were delighted when he went further and unfolded a plan that would enable them to give a more elaborate demonstration of their talents.

After supper, while Dinsmore was studying in his room with the door closed, Reed entered unceremoniously.

'Have you seen the notice those fresh guys have posted out here in the corridor?' he asked.

Dinsmore stepped to the door and saw a large placard affixed to the wall opposite. It read as follows:



THE CLASH WAS BRIEF

KNIGHT OF THE BATH

ATTENTION, FIFTH FORM!

I, Donald Murray, Knight of the Bath, aided by my trusty squire, T. Monroe, Paddler Extraordinary, having vanquished all comers in the Water Joust, do hereby pronounce and proclaim myself Supreme Champion. An ye be not all caitiffs and naughty knaves, let there stand forth one willing to enter the lists against me, that I may do my devoir upon him and aid him to cleanse his vile and filthy body with a hearty good will and that right merrily.

DONALD MURRAY

Dinsmore was indignant. 'For the sake of the School some one ought to suppress that fresh guy with his nutty idea of humor.'

'Almost insulting, the way he's posted his placard directly opposite your door,' suggested Reed. 'Like a special challenge to you — as if you particularly were a vile and filthy body.'

'I don't know but what it would be more dignified to tear the notice down and ignore it,' said Dinsmore.

'He'd only put it up again; he'd go on taunting the Fifth Form until he finally got somebody to accept his challenge. And then he'd probably spill him. You're right; I think it's our duty to suppress this Fourth-Form nuisance.'

'How do you mean "our"?'

'Yours and mine. You'll admit I'm good at paddling, whether I am at tennis or not.'

'Yes, you're all there in a canoe; I'll admit that.'

'And you're the stocky build, like Murray — the kind that it won't be easy to upset. Are you afraid to go up against him?'

'Afraid? Me? No more than I am of you in tennis.'

'Then I'll tell Murray we'll accept his challenge. Or would you rather write him a letter in his own style?'

Dinsmore waved his hand disdainfully. 'Tell him anything you like. Tell him he'd better wear armor — except that he'd drown if he did.'

'We'll arrange for it a week from to-day,' said Reed. 'That will give us time to practice, and to get everybody interested. The only point in accepting the challenge is to make sure that a big crowd will be on hand.'

'That's right. And leave his silly notice on the wall. It will stir the fellows up when they see it; they'll none of them want to miss the show.'

He read Murray's placard a second time and seemed to become more inflamed by it.

'Freshest thing I ever heard of!' he fumed. 'A Fourth-Former coming into a Fifth-Form building and putting up a sign like that!'

'And right opposite your door, too!'

'He'll be sorry for it.'

Henry appeared in the corridor at that moment, and Dinsmore invited his attention to the sign. Henry seemed to find it amusing rather than offensive, and laughed — an impropriety that exasperated Dinsmore.

'I'm glad for the sake of the Form that some of us have too much pride to see anything funny in that,' Dinsmore remarked coldly.

'Dan and I are going to take these fresh guys on and show them up,' said Reed.

'You'll make a great team,' Henry answered ironically.

'If you think you can do any better, get some fellow and we'll show you you're mistaken. And if you have any class spirit at all you'll be at the swimming hole a week from to-day to see me show young Murray where he gets off.'

'Yes,' said Reed. 'Dan is going to be the Fifth Form's champion in this affair. We must all back him up.'

'I'll want some practice beforehand,' said Dinsmore. 'You can go out in a canoe, Henry, and let me poke you off into the water.'

'Fine idea, very,' responded Henry.

Yet unexpectedly Henry showed himself willing the next day to contend with Dinsmore for the privilege of being challenger. At the swimming hole he had a paddle with a large bath

sponge bound on at the end of the blade, covering the edge of it, and he stood up in a canoe that Earle Castleman was paddling and announced that it was yet to be seen whether Dan Dinsmore was an adequate representative of the Fifth or not.

'I'll make a monkey of him,' Dinsmore said to Reed. 'He can hardly keep his balance as it is.'

Reed pushed off in his canoe, and Dinsmore stood up in the bow and brandished his weapon. Reed was more skillful than Earle Castleman in managing a canoe; he brought his craft up in such a way that Dinsmore was able to strike while Henry was not in position. Overboard went Henry, capsizing the canoe.

'That's what I'll do to that fresh guy that calls himself Supreme Champion,' boasted Dinsmore. 'Anybody else want to challenge for the right to pitch young Murray overboard?'

Several volunteered, but none fared any better than Henry had done. With each new and easy victory Dinsmore, standing in the canoe, swelled in confidence and pride and brandished his sponge-tipped lance more flamboyantly. His partner's amusement increased; Reed laughed heartily while Dinsmore hurled his taunts and challenges upon the air.

'You don't need any practice,' Henry called to him from the shore. 'You can take young

Murray now and handle him just as easily as you did me.'

'Yes, but we must advertise the show beforehand,' said Dinsmore. 'We want to have a big crowd out to see him humiliated. That's what we've got to do — humiliate the fresh guy so that we'll have no more of his impudence.'

There was sufficient preliminary advertising of the event. Murray and Monroe posted daily notices of the low esteem in which they held the Fifth-Form champion and of the duckings to which they would subject him — notices couched in what Dinsmore contemptuously termed 'Ivanhoe English.' On the other hand Earle Castleman and Henry exercised their ingenuity in devising posters that would inflame both Dinsmore and the Fourth Form; they announced that their champion, though a Fifth-Former of but moderate ability and courage, would overcome the best that the Fourth could offer, and they bespoke for him the loyal support of every true Fifth-Former. They did not sign their names to these notices, and Dinsmore's indignant efforts to ascertain the authorship were futile.

On the afternoon appointed for the combat the shore of the swimming hole was crowded with members of the Fourth and Fifth Forms; they all had the appearance of expecting a hu-

morous rather than an exciting event. First to paddle up to the float were the Fifth-Form pair, clad in bathing-trunks, Sam Reed dipping his blade leisurely while Dinsmore reclined in the waist of the canoe in an attitude of unconcern. A few moments later the hostile craft rounded the point of land that projected out above the swimming hole. Immediately there was an outburst of laughter from the spectators; for in the bow of the canoe, posed heroically, with one foot raised and planted on the thwart, with sponge-tipped spear held before him in his right hand and a gold-painted shield made out of a barrel-head held before him in his left hand, wearing a gold-painted pasteboard helmet with a plume plucked from a feather duster, Donald Murray captured the fancy of the crowd.

'What ho!' he shouted. 'Where is he that dares challenge the supremacy of the Knight in Golden Armor?'

'Here is he!' cried Sam Reed, pointing to his partner.

'Nay, 'tis no true knight accoutred thus, with neither shield nor buckler. 'Tis some poor village hind or serf; bid him give place to one of nobler blood.'

Goaded by the insult and the laughter with which it was received, Dinsmore rose to his feet and cried, 'I'll knock your block off!'

Cautiously Reed paddled away from the float out into the middle of the pool; warily the other craft approached. Murray maintained his haughty and disdainful attitude, insecure of equilibrium though it was; Dinsmore braced himself, lowered his spear, and made ready to thrust with it when he should be within striking distance. The canoes were approaching each other bow on.

Suddenly Reed swerved his canoe sharply to the right across Murray's bow. Dinsmore, unprepared for the maneuver, was left helpless and exposed to the enemy. And Murray, with a gesture nonchalant and delicate, raised his spear, poked Dinsmore in the ribs with the sponge, and sent him toppling. By skillful handling, Reed succeeded in keeping the canoe from capsizing as Dinsmore went overboard.

Coming to the surface, Dinsmore heard the shouts and laughter of the spectators. Even those whom he might rightly have regarded as his supporters, the members of the Fifth Form, seemed more amused than chagrined at his disaster. He swam to the float, clambered up on it, and shouted, 'It's the best three out of five, Murray; you can't win on a fluke!'

'Odds bodikins, three out of five or seven out of nine, 'twere all one to me,' replied Murray.

'Go to it, Dan!' shouted a Fifth-Former de-

risively. 'Let's see you knock his block off!'

Dinsmore scolded Reed vigorously. 'What were you trying to do anyway? That was your fault. You rush right at him now and don't swing aside till after I ram him.'

Reed made no answer, but pushed the craft through the water rapidly. In a moment he and Monroe were sending their canoes towards each other at top speed. Unperturbed, Murray held his statuesque attitude while Dinsmore stood with knees bent and shoulders lowered. The enemy was on his right, and he was prepared to lunge at him as the canoes slipped past each other.

But again Reed executed his peculiar maneuver and swung his canoe suddenly across the enemy's bow. Again Dinsmore, wholly unprepared, was helpless, and Murray poled him into the water with ridiculous ease.

This time as Dinsmore scrambled out upon the float he was left in no doubt that he had been the victim of a joke that amused his friends as much as it did the members of the Fourth Form.

'Come on, Dan; make a fight of it!' cried Henry.

'Hit that baby again and get a cigar!' shouted a Fourth-Former.

'Don't let them think you're easy, Dan,' cried Ralph Butler.

'I won't let anybody think I'm easy,' Dinsmore answered angrily. 'Bring that canoe here, Sam. It's three out of five.'

Sam Reed propelled the canoe up to the float and held it there while Dinsmore embarked.

'Land on him this time, Dan,' Reed urged. 'Knock his block off. Don't let him have it all his own way.'

Dinsmore did not deign to reply. Reed paddled the canoe away from the float. Then suddenly Dinsmore struck — not at Murray, who was still yards away, but at his faithless colleague. He rammed the dripping sponge against Sam's unsuspecting mouth, and with such force that Sam turned a back somersault clean over the stern of the canoe. For an instant afterwards Dinsmore remained upright but wobbling; then he lost his balance and went under also.

Reed, coming to the surface, was conscious of considerable physical discomfort. He felt much as he might have done if a horse had kicked him in the mouth; but a momentary investigation satisfied him that he had lost no teeth and that his jaw was not broken. Relieved of anxiety, he cried wrathfully, 'What do you think you're doing, you boob?'

Dinsmore, scrambling up on the float, offered no response; and Reed, pushing his canoe ashore, made the unwelcome discovery that the spectat-

ors now regarded him rather than his former partner as a fit object of amusement.

'That was a good one he handed you, Sam,' said Henry.

'I guess Dan has the last laugh after all,' remarked Ralph Butler.

'I guess you won't be so keen to double-cross a fellow next time,' observed Dinsmore, from his position on the float.

Donald Murray contributed a timely diversion. Maintaining his posture of the unconquerable knight, he shouted, 'Be there none others of sufficient valor to shiver a lance with me? Beshrew me, caitiff cowards and sorry miscreants all! Zounds, odds bodikins, and eftsoon!'

Dinsmore waved his hand good-naturedly. 'All right, young fellow! This is your day.' He turned to Sam Reed, who was still stroking his mouth somewhat tenderly. 'What was the big idea, Sam, double-crossing me — and you other fellows in on it?' His glance embraced Henry and Earle and Ralph Butler.

Reed grinned. 'You hate so like poison to be licked we all thought it would do you a lot of good to have the kid give you a public licking. It *was* a good show, too.'

'Especially at the end,' said Henry.

With amicable relations reëstablished, Reed and Dinsmore proceeded to dress while Henry

and Earle and the other fellows strolled away from the swimming hole.

'I don't think I hate to be licked any more than most fellows do,' said Dinsmore.

'I think you do,' said Reed. 'And you certainly do enjoy gloating over a fellow when you lick him.'

'Well,' Dinsmore remarked after a moment, 'live and learn.'

'Same here.'

Again there was a pause, finally broken by Dinsmore's remark, 'The kid Murray *is* sort of amusing.'

XIV

ONE WAY TO WIN

WHILE Earle Castleman spent most of his spare time in the last month of the school year writing for the Mirror, and Henry, after the boat races had been held, in which he rowed on a winning crew, turned to baseball, Reed and Dinsmore divided their attention equally between tennis and golf. They were among the five fellows selected to play on the St. Timothy's golf team against St. John's; Dinsmore was in fact the ranking golf player of the School. He had a special reason for wishing to do his best in the match with St. John's. The St. John's number one player, who would play against him, was Peter Crowell, who at home was one of his friends. The two boys lived in the same block in Boston and had been competitors in nearly every branch of sport before they had gone to rival schools.

'It will be good to go up against old Pete again,' Dinsmore said to Reed the evening before the day of the match. He had been polishing his clubs; he held up his mashie and inspected its shining metal face.

Reed laid down the putter he had been hand-

ling and said, 'You drive a longer ball than he does. But he's a cool proposition. You won't win through his mistakes.'

'It will be an advantage to play him here on our own course.'

'Yes. But he's always at his best in a tournament.'

'I know that. He's a hard man to beat when he's just playing for himself, but he'll be harder to beat when he's playing for his School.'

'I guess he has nothing on you there,' said Reed. 'I guess you'll trim him.'

Dinsmore was one of those whose spirits thrive on the promise of excitement. Moreover, excitement did not unsettle his nerves. He spent a few minutes after Reed had gone anticipating the meeting with Pete Crowell and the satisfaction of demonstrating that he and not Pete was the best player in either of the two schools; then he took up his geometry and studied with an unruffled mind for the approaching examination.

The next day the golf team from St. John's arrived at noon; their hosts and opponents welcomed them and took them to walk over the golf course in order that they might familiarize themselves somewhat with it. Dinsmore and Crowell walked together. Although Crowell chatted eagerly of the friends at home and of other interests that he and Dinsmore had in

common, his eyes were alert all the time; Dinsmore saw that he was noting in his mind the features of each hole.

'Taking everything in, aren't you, Pete?' he said. 'You always were a regular hawk-eye.'

'When I'm up against you, I've got to use everything I have,' said Crowell.

'Same here. And we've never yet played a match for blood, like this one. How much better are you than when I played you last?'

'Oh, about a hundred per cent.'

There was a twinkle in Crowell's eyes, and Dinsmore answered, 'Boy, if that's all, not a chance — not a chance.'

'You always talked cocky,' said Crowell, and Dinsmore blushed, thinking of the recent lesson that had been administered to him on that account. 'I guess it's time I came up here — for your own good.'

Dinsmore took Crowell in to lunch as his guest and felt almost as proud as if it had been a distinguished brother that he was showing off. Crowell seemed to be attracted to all the fellows and to get on friendly terms with them in a surprisingly short time.

When Dinsmore, after introducing Henry Noble, remarked that Henry was to caddy for him during the match, Crowell said, 'Our crowd will have to get along without caddies. They

wouldn't let any fellows besides the team come.'

Somewhat hesitantly Earle Castleman spoke up. 'I'll be glad to caddy for you, if you want me to.'

'Take him on, Pete,' said Dinsmore. 'I don't know how good he is at following the ball, but he won't bother you with advice.'

'Glad to have any advice he'll give me,' Crowell answered. 'Mighty good of you, Castleman; I'll be delighted.'

'I guess we'll get all your men fixed up with caddies,' Dinsmore said. 'You and I start last, I believe, Pete.'

'Yes, so I'm told. That suits me; it will be more interesting, for before we get through we'll know pretty well how things stand.'

'It will be more interesting if it's close and less interesting if one side is swamping the other,' remarked Dinsmore.

'I guess it will be close all right,' said Reed. 'They tell me I'm to start third with Osborne. How good is Osborne, Pete?'

'He's steady. Not a very long game, but he's steady.'

After witnessing the start of the first four pairs, Dinsmore concurred in Crowell's opinion that the match would be close. When a St. John's player made a good drive, his St. Timothy's op-

ponent followed with a good one also; and after a player had hooked or sliced his first shot it seemed as if his opponent immediately felt bound out of courtesy to do no better.

Finally Nolan of St. Timothy's and Harris of St. John's, the fourth pair to start, were well out of the way, and Dinsmore teed his ball. His drive was low and straight, down the middle of the fairway, and carried for about two hundred yards. Henry, holding Dinsmore's bag of clubs, smiled but remained decorously silent. Crowell stepping up to the tee, remarked in an unconcerned manner, 'I've got to go some,' and without any preliminary motions swung and sent his ball also on a line and just a little to the right of Dinsmore's.

'I guess I can't count too much on my long game to beat you,' said Dinsmore, as they set off on their round.

'I think I get a little more swing than I used to,' Crowell answered.

From that time on they did not talk much to each other, and the two caddies and the three or four other fellows who followed them preserved a careful silence. Neither player relaxed from the pace at which he had set out; both of them were playing their best, and at the end of the first nine holes, they were even up. At the thirteenth tee, with Dinsmore one up, word reached them that

the first pair had finished, with a victory for St. Timothy's. The news seemed only to inspire Crowell, for although Dinsmore made the hole in four, which was par, Crowell was on the green in two and then ran down a long putt, making the score even up. They halved the fourteenth hole, and at the fifteenth tee they learned that the second and third pairs had finished, and that the score was now two to one in favor of St. John's, but that Nolan, at the seventeenth tee, was two up on his opponent.

'Looks as if we'd have to settle it,' said Dinsmore to Henry. 'Frank Nolan won't crack on the last two holes.'

And before Dinsmore and Crowell had reached the green of the fifteenth, word had been brought to them that Nolan had won, three up and one to play.

At that point Crowell had a bit of bad luck and got into a bunker that cost him an extra stroke. Dinsmore, winning the hole in five, went into the lead. From the sixteenth tee he made a long drive that carried well over the sand traps in the middle of the fairway. Crowell topped his ball, but was lucky in that it stopped short of the traps. The advantage that Dinsmore had apparently won by his drive was wiped out when Crowell played a long brassie shot almost to the green. Dinsmore's next shot fell short of Crow-

ell's, and Crowell won the hole in five, and again the match was even.

Spectators appeared in greater numbers at the seventeenth tee; among them were the players on both sides who had already finished.

'Don't you want one of your own men to caddy for you now?' Earle asked Crowell.

'No,' Crowell answered. 'It might change the luck. It broke right for me that time.'

He stooped and teed his ball carefully. The seventeenth was the longest hole of the course. A cautious player would follow the fairway to the point where it bent almost at right angles round the tangle of weeds and long grass that thrust in from the left like a wedge. But one who had confidence in the power of his drive might try to clear the hazard, and if his shot came off well he would have a great advantage over his less daring opponent.

After a moment's deliberation, Crowell took an iron instead of a wooden club; he had decided to play safe, in the hope that Dinsmore, if he risked a long drive, would send his ball into the rough. Crowell's shot was a good one; his ball came to rest in the fairway a few feet from the point of the wedge.

Dinsmore addressed his ball, eager to seize the advantage that would be his if he successfully made a long drive. There was a tense moment;

every one realized the importance of this shot. Dinsmore swung hard — too hard; instead of hitting the ball cleanly he topped it and sent it into the long grass some distance from the edge of the fairway.

He bit his lip, disappointed at the result, but chiefly nettled at the thought that Crowell should have anticipated so correctly his inability to control his shot in a crisis. He strode off at once with Henry to search for his ball; Crowell, strolling down the fairway with Earle Castleman, discoursed blithely.

'I suppose some people would say that play of mine showed lack of nerve,' he remarked. 'If I hadn't played so much with Dan that I know pretty well how things affect him, I wouldn't have tried it. He's always so keen to win, he gets over-eager and presses. I felt that if I played safe he'd feel that here was his big chance, and he'd try to kill the ball. And you know that's almost always fatal.'

'You lured him into trouble all right,' admitted Earle.

Coming up to his ball, Crowell took a brassie and made a shot that carried far down towards the green. Then he and Earle entered the unmowed strip in which Dinsmore, aided by Henry, had begun to search for his ball.

The four tramped this way and that, beating

among the weeds and long grass with clubs. Time passed, and finally Mr. Libby, who was umpiring the match, called, 'Only one minute more, Dan.'

Dinsmore thrashed about with his club desperately. A lost ball meant that he would lose the hole, and that Crowell would go to the last tee in the lead.

Crowell continued to pace back and forth, swinging his club. Suddenly he caught sight of the ball, half obscured from view but lying in a position that made it easily playable. Crowell turned away from it and stood motionless.

'Time's up,' called Mr. Libby.

'All right,' said Dinsmore. 'Your hole, Pete.'

Crowell walked back a few steps.

'Here's a ball,' he said, and stooped and picked it up. 'This yours, Dan?'

He handed it to Dinsmore, who after a glance said with chagrin, 'That's mine, yes.'

'Of course if it had been a friendly match with just ourselves to consider I'd have pointed it out to you right off,' said Crowell. 'But I had to think of my School.'

'Your School will be proud of you,' exclaimed Earle, in a burst of anger. He dropped Crowell's bag of clubs on the ground. 'I'm through.'

Crowell flushed and raising his head proudly looked at the four other St. John's players who

stood by. In no face did he see any expression of approval or support.

'All right,' he said haughtily, and he picked up the bag that Earle had flung down. 'When I represent my School I'm not free to do some things that I would do if I represented only myself. — Burke' — turning to one of his teammates — 'do you want to caddy for me the rest of the way?'

'No,' said Burke bluntly. 'You can go it alone.'

'Thank you.'

Crowell, with his head high, walked on as if indifferent to the isolation that he had brought upon himself. He had gone but a few steps when Dinsmore joined him. Dinsmore wished to show that he still felt friendly, but he did not find anything to say. Henry Noble did speak.

'What I'm wondering,' Henry remarked dryly, 'is why you should have gone in and hunted for his ball, Crowell.'

'I always help the other fellow to hunt for his ball. A ball has some value. Of course I'm not surprised to have a St. Timothy's fellow take the thing as Castleman did. But I didn't suppose my own crowd would turn against me for doing my duty to the School.'

'You might have pretended that you hadn't seen the ball till after time was up,' suggested

Henry. 'We might have suspected you, but nobody could have said anything.'

'I don't pretend. I'm honest.'

'Yes,' said Dinsmore. 'Pete's playing for his School and doing his best for it. I have no kick coming.'

'Just the same, you've got to beat him now,' said Henry.

Arriving at the eighteenth tee, Crowell made his preparations to drive as if unaware of the hostile group of spectators. The hole was about three hundred and fifty yards in length; two bunkers, one at a distance of a hundred and twenty yards and the other thirty yards beyond that, barred a broad section of the fairway, and the green was virtually an island surrounded by sand pits, connected with the fairway by three narrow causeways. Crowell's drive cleared the second bunker; and at once Dinsmore's chance of winning the hole and tying the score seemed remote. It seemed to vanish completely when he topped the ball and sent it only a hundred yards down the fairway. The crowd followed in silence as he walked briskly on to make his second shot. He took his brassie and swung with a free and reckless swing, and this time the swing was right; the ball flew on a line straight for the green and when it struck the turf it rolled almost to the edge of the sand pit. Then there was for the first time

a spontaneous outburst of clapping from those looking on — clapping in which the St. John's spectators took part.

'Peach of a shot,' Crowell said to Dinsmore, and started on to play his own ball.

He played it badly; instead of lofting it in air and dropping it on the green, he topped it, and it rolled over the edge of the bank and into the bottom of the sand pit. Dinsmore, on the other hand, made a perfect approach shot, tossing his ball on the green within two feet of the hole. Again there was applause from the spectators, and Henry thumped Dinsmore on the back and said, 'Oh, Boy, what a finish!'

Meanwhile Crowell descended into the sand pit. The position of his ball did not present any special difficulties, but he had to loft it quite sharply into the air in order to get it up over the edge of the bank. He made the stroke skillfully; the ball rose and dropped on the green and rolled to within about twelve feet of the hole. Crowell and Dinsmore had now each taken three strokes; Dinsmore was reasonably certain to hole out in his next stroke, and Crowell needed therefore to run down a twelve-foot putt if he was to keep the match from going to an extra hole. He took perhaps a minute studying the distance, gauging the weight of the blow that he should give; then he tapped the ball with his putter and it rolled

straight for the hole and had just momentum enough to tumble over the edge and in.

'Good work, Pete!' cried Dinsmore, and he stepped forward and shook the winner's hand.

There was no other expression of congratulation. Several St. Timothy's fellows came up to Dinsmore and told him that he had played mighty well, and that it was hard luck, but none of them spoke to Crowell or even glanced at him. Nor did any of the other St. John's fellows pay any attention to him. They walked quietly away, leaving Crowell to look out for himself.

Dinsmore accompanied him to the dressing-room.

'There evidently won't be much rejoicing at St. John's over this victory,' Crowell remarked. 'Funny thing to win a match and go home in disgrace.' His tone was philosophical, but it could not disguise his bitterness.

'Now, Pete,' said Dinsmore, 'don't let that trouble you too much. You did what you thought was right, and you were aboveboard about it. And the nerve you showed at the finish, with everybody against you — it was wonderful. You can't be downed by anything; don't mind a little unpopularity. It won't last.'

'You're a mighty good friend, Dan. If it was a mean trick I played, I'm sorry I had to play it on you.'

'Forget it,' Dinsmore answered. 'You wanted to take every advantage you could for St. John's.'

In similar terms Dinsmore defended Crowell against criticism after he had departed with his resentful team-mates.

He was especially earnest in trying to overcome the strong prejudice which eye-witnesses of Crowell's actions, Henry Noble and Earle Castleman particularly, had conceived for the visiting champion. At the same time he let Earle know that he had been quite gratified by the burst of indignation which had accompanied his resignation of the office of caddy.

'I didn't know you had so much fire in you,' he said. 'But just the same, Crowell's a good fellow, he really is, Earle.'

Without being convinced by that assurance, Earle and Henry were willing to admit that perhaps Crowell's actions might have been due to a mistaken sense of obligation to his School. They also conceded that his display of coolness and nerve at the end of the golf match had been remarkable.

'I guess he'll have a poor time the rest of the year at St. John's,' said Henry. 'Those fellows were as sore as I was.'

Dinsmore and Reed occasionally in the remaining days of the School year exchanged a word of

curiosity as to how Crowell was getting on at St. John's. They had no opportunity to learn, then or during the summer; instead of seeing Crowell frequently at Marblehead as Dinsmore had done in former summer vacations, he saw him not at all, for the reason that the Crowell family had gone to Europe.

In the autumn, however, after the opening of the football season, Dinsmore received some information about Crowell, and it was of a reassuring character; he was playing left halfback on the St. John's eleven, and he was playing well. No doubt, therefore, he had regained whatever standing he might have lost.

To Dinsmore himself there came in this autumn of his last year at St. Timothy's a greatly coveted and fairly earned honor. At the close of the series of football games between the Corinthians and the Pythians, he was elected captain of the School team which was to meet the St. John's eleven. Henry Noble was his closest competitor for the honor; but this year it had been Dinsmore and not Henry who had been the outstanding player in the preliminary games, and Henry, if he could not help being a little disappointed by the result of the election, could not feel that the choice was unjust.

A steady drizzle all the morning of the day set for the St. John's game soaked the St. Timothy's

field. But the rain ceased shortly before the hour when the game was to begin, and the spectators flocked cheerfully to the sidelines. St. John's held a brief signal practice; then, as they finished and while St. Timothy's took the field for their turn, Dinsmore ran across and shook hands with Crowell; it was 'Hello, Pete, old man!' and 'Fine to see you, Dan.'

A few moments later the game had begun. The ground was soft and slippery, and the players slid and stumbled and soon became plastered with mud. Fumbles occurred frequently, but the footing was so bad that neither side seemed able to profit much by its opponent's errors. The first half ended without a score. The first period of the second half yielded no result. In the final period of the game, Tilden, the St. Timothy's quarterback, dropped a punt, and St. John's recovered the ball on St. Timothy's five-yard line. On the next play Howe of St. John's tried to go through the center, but the home line held firm, and after the effort Howe had to be helped off the field, suffering from a twisted ankle. A substitute entered the game; Crowell was given the ball and sent at right tackle, but he rushed into Henry's arms and made no gain. The ball was, however, directly in front of the St. Timothy's goal.

Marshall, the St. John's captain, held a brief

conference with Crowell; then he asked the referee to call time and explained that he would like to speak to the St. Timothy's captain.

Dinsmore, being summoned, came up and Marshall said to him, 'Our drop kicker, Howe, has had to leave the game; our only other man who can drop kick is Crowell. But because of the slippery ground he put on a pair of shoes with extra thick cleats, and he can't drop kick in those shoes at all. He told me he was ashamed to ask you to let him change, but that he had an idea you would let him if he did ask you.'

'Why, of course,' said Dinsmore. 'Tell him to go ahead and change; we'll wait for him.'

Accompanied by the referee, Crowell ran to the sideline and called for his other pair of shoes. Then while the referee stood over him he hastily made the change. He came running back, the referee blew his whistle, and the players on the two teams sprang into position. Marshall called out a signal and Crowell dropped back to try for a goal from the field. The ball was passed to him, he got it safely away just before the St. Timothy's forwards charged down upon him, and it sailed over the cross-bar. Three to nothing in favor of St. John's was the score, and at the end of the game that was still the score.

In the dressing-room Dinsmore tried to comfort Tilden and two or three other players who

felt that their mistakes were accountable for the defeat. He was disappointed enough himself. He wished that they might play that team once more — on a dry field. But talking to the other fellows he was cheerful and philosophical.

When he came out of the athletic house, accompanied by Henry, he found Crowell on the steps.

'Dan,' said Crowell, 'the other fellows are waiting for me, but before I go I want to say to you what I've said to them — and that is, I'd rather lose the way you did this afternoon than win the way I did last spring. Good-bye, old man; my hat is off to you — always.'

He grasped Dinsmore's hand, then turned and ran to the bus in which sat his team-mates singing triumphantly the St. John's song.

XV

SOMETHING TO WRITE HOME ABOUT

To Henry his last year at St. Timothy's seemed to hasten to its end. It was as if he had hardly time to taste and enjoy the pleasant things of school life before he was being hurried away from them and brought nearer to the dread climax of the college board examinations. Faithfully as he had studied, he could not escape a fear of these as presenting an ordeal quite unlike that of the School examinations which he had always faced with little concern. Sam Reed, who had seldom been seriously perturbed by the periodic tests of scholarship which the School imposed, was also beset by anxiety under the stress of preparing for the 'college boards'; he complained to Henry that it took all the joy out of life. And Dan Dinsmore, to whom the very word examination was associated with panic, was in a quite miserable state of mind whenever he permitted himself to think of the approaching crisis. In fact, of all the fellows in the Sixth Form, Earle Castleman was the only one who in the last two months of the School year took life about as usual.

One day early in May Henry lingered in

Earle's room after the meeting of the editors of the Mirror which had been held there had dissolved.

'It's wonderful the way you go on turning out work for the Mirror, just as if there were no college boards ahead,' he remarked. 'They don't seem to mean anything in your young life.'

'They're just examinations. I've never had any trouble with examinations, so why should I worry?'

'I've never had any special trouble with them either, but I worry a good deal about these. They're so awfully important.'

'I suppose they are, but I just think of them as examinations.'

'And so as just nothing at all! I wish I had some of your self-confidence.'

'Self-confidence! Me!' Earle laughed mockingly.

'What else is it? With the biggest test that we've had put up to us.'

'That kind of a test doesn't mean anything.'

'Say that to Dan Dinsmore. The poor guy is almost having a nervous breakdown over it.'

'It's no test of what a fellow really is — only of what he can remember. Any test of what a fellow is — that's where I'm afraid I should wilt.'

'No, you wouldn't. There's no fellow in the whole School that's developed the way you've

done. As a new kid you were the meekest, most helpless specimen I've ever seen. And now look at you, editor-in-chief of the Mirror and doing a wonderful job at it, running the steam-roller over the rest of us whenever you please, insisting on putting Donald Murray on the board when the rest of us were doubtful, and then bringing him along until we all had to admit you were right about him. — Why, you may not realize it, but in three years you've become a regular fellow.'

'Oh, that's just literary — just the same sort of thing as passing examinations. But if it was anything requiring action — anything that was a real test of character — then I'd be scared; in fact, I know I'd be just as helpless as I ever was. And I'd know that in anything of that kind you and Sam Reed and Dan Dinsmore would all of you come through.'

'You don't know anything of the kind — about either yourself or us,' said Henry.

'I have that feeling about myself anyway,' said Earle. 'And I don't believe I shall ever get over it.'

'You'll have to get over it; you can't let a foolish idea about yourself spoil everything for you.'

Earle was silent for a few moments; there was an unhappy look in his eyes.

'It isn't just a foolish idea,' he said. 'I guess

I'll tell you — there's a thing that sort of haunts me, I was so helpless and cowardly. A year ago in the vacation I was walking along a street with a cousin of mine, a girl about my age; and suddenly a kid four or five years old ran out into the middle of the street right in the path of an automobile. I was paralyzed, I just yelled, "Look out!" But my cousin made a jump and grabbed the kid by the collar and pulled him out of the way just as the fellow in the car put on his brakes and barely missed hitting him. If my cousin hadn't been there the kid would have been killed — and I'd have known that I had just stood and let it happen.'

'One mistake like that doesn't prove anything. You'll be Johnny-on-the-spot next time — all the more sure to be for taking that slip so much to heart.'

'I wish I could believe it. It's really a miserable thing to feel you'll never come up to scratch in an emergency.'

'Well, you come up to scratch most of the time; don't worry about the emergencies. — Gosh, Earle, I've been thinking up to now that you'd got the better of that inferiority complex that you had when you were a new kid.'

'No, I've only learned to hide it — more or less.'

Henry looked at him sympathetically. 'You

don't know nearly so much about yourself as you think you do,' he said. 'Just forget the kid and the automobile and emergencies and take things as they come, from now on.'

'I'll try. But it would be grand if I could once meet an emergency and get the better of it! I guess that's the only thing that will cure me!'

The subject of Earle's 'inferiority complex' recurred to Henry's mind at intervals; it was interesting to ponder on it and try to think how a fellow could be helped to overcome such a weakness. And one day the thought occurred to Henry, why not present Earle with an emergency? With this idea in mind, it was not difficult to work out a plan. It seemed to him so brilliant, so certain to accomplish his purpose, and so amusing that he simply had to share it with some one; he took Sam Reed and Dan Dinsmore into his confidence. They were delighted; it promised a pleasant diversion from examination anxieties, and if it really should result in any benefit to Earle they certainly would not begrudge it to him.

'But you'll each of you swear you'll never tell a soul — least of all Earle?' Henry said.

'Absolutely,' they assured him.

So in accordance with the plan, the three seized upon Earle one day after lunch and invited him to join them as they were going for a

walk. It was a somewhat chilly day for early June; the sky was overcast and a stiff northerly wind was blowing. They walked briskly for a couple of miles and came through the woods to Cameron's Pond, which was about a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide. The surface of the water was ruffled and dark under the wind.

'I haven't had a swim yet this year,' said Henry. 'Let's go in; it will brace us up.'

'Not for me, thank you,' said Dinsmore. 'I have a cold.'

'I'm not keen about it,' said Reed. 'But I'd love to look on while you and Earle go in.'

'No, it's too cold,' said Earle.

'Oh, do you good,' urged Henry. 'Come on, Earle, don't hang back. These other two fellows are lazy. Be a sport. I'll dare you to swim out to that island with me.' Henry began to undress. 'Come on, Earle,' he insisted.

Then, reluctantly, Earle took off his coat and sat down to untie his shoelaces.

'Sam, you and I will collect wild flowers to present to the winner,' said Dinsmore; and he and Reed strolled together into the woods.

Henry was first to enter the water and swam out, splashing violently.

'Cold, all right,' he shouted. 'Come along, Earle.'

With a rush and a plunge Earle followed. It

was cold, but he had often swum in even colder water, and he ought to be able to make the distance to the island and back without getting thoroughly chilled. He went after Henry in his most rapid and vigorous style, hand over hand, head burrowing down into the water. He had got about halfway to the island and was only a few feet away from Henry when suddenly Henry ceased swimming, struggled feebly for a moment, and then with an agonized expression on his face called, 'Oh, help me!' flung up his hands, and sank.

The panic that Earle felt then was like none that he had ever felt before. He screamed, 'Help! Help!' and looked back at the shore, but neither Sam Reed nor Dan Dinsmore was to be seen. He must do something else than scream; he took a full breath, plunged under, and encountered Henry's inert body rising to the surface. He grasped him underneath one arm, but Henry clutched with his other hand at Earle's shoulder. With an instant memory of life-saving lessons, Earle seized Henry's nose, pressed the nostrils together and drove his knee into his stomach; Henry relaxed his grip. Earle got his hands on each side of Henry's head from behind, and, holding him firmly, began to swim on his back. He seemed to make hardly any progress. The chill of the water and the terror of the situa-

tion had exhausted him, but Henry now did not struggle; he lay quiet as if unconscious.

From time to time Earle shouted for help, but there was no response. He swam wearily on, getting more numb, more weak — until at last, in a despairing, backward glance, he caught sight of Reed and Dinsmore emerging from the woods.

'Help me, fellows!' he called. 'I'm all in!'

They rushed excitedly down to the edge of the water, and stopped there.

'What's the matter?' Reed asked.

'Henry had a cramp or something — you'll have to come in and help. Quick!'

'I think you can touch bottom now,' suggested Dinsmore. 'Try it.'

Earle did try it and stood with his chin above the surface. Slowly he began to walk backward, still towing Henry by holding his head between his hands. The water became more shallow; Henry, who had seemed quite unconscious, began to show signs of life, and at last, when it was about knee deep, he floundered over, gasping and moaning, and crawled out on his hands and knees. Then he lay, groaning and moaning, on the grass. Earle, blue and shivering, was almost speechless.

'You'd better get dressed. You're freezing,' said Dinsmore brusquely. 'We'll look after Henry.'

While Earle got himself shivering into his garments, Dinsmore used Henry's underclothes as a towel upon the prostrate victim and Reed cuffed and slapped him up and down the back with an energy that soon caused the pitiable groans to cease and protests to arise.

'I'm all right now; stop pounding me.' Henry spoke with asperity, but it appeared to be with the utmost feebleness that he put on his clothes, and his voice seemed again to be in a weak condition when he asked, 'What happened to me anyway?'

'What happened to you?' said Dinsmore. 'You'd be at the bottom of the pond now, I guess, if it hadn't been for Earle. Sam and I were in the woods; what did happen, Earle?'

'I guess he had a cramp. He just suddenly went down.' Earle's teeth were still chattering so that he could hardly speak.

'It certainly was mighty fine work, your getting him,' said Reed.

'I'm afraid I didn't behave awfully well.' Henry spoke apologetically. 'I sort of lost my head, I guess, and grabbed him.'

'Did he pull you down, Earle?' asked Dinsmore.

'No-no, b-but I had to — hit him.'

'Lucky for him you did, I guess.'

'W-well, it was s-self-defense.'

'Mighty good nerve, I'll say. — Here you are

— I'll help you into your coat. You're cold, aren't you?'

'Yes, a little.'

'You'd better run for a while and get warmed up. We'll follow along with Henry.'

'All right, I guess I will.' Earle started off along the path through the woods at a wavering trot.

Reed and Dinsmore turned grinning faces toward Henry.

'It's all real enough to him,' Henry said. 'Don't either of you dare to spoil it.'

'I won't,' said Reed. 'He's all right.'

'I was watching from behind a tree,' said Dinsmore. 'He did quite a good job.'

'I'll say he did. I grabbed him just as if I'd lost my head entirely, and he pinched my nose and gave me the most awful belt in the belly — regular life-saver stuff.'

'You took quite a chance,' Reed observed. 'Suppose he had lost his head and grabbed hold of you?'

'Then I'd have had to do the life-saver act myself; I was all ready for it. But he kept his head and he kept his nerve — and it ought to do him a whole lot of good.'

'Sure,' said Dinsmore. 'We'll give him a regular hero reputation.'

Before the afternoon was over, there was

hardly a boy in the School who did not know of the plucky rescue that Earle Castleman had achieved.

'I think we ought to see that Earle gets one of those Carnegie hero medals,' said Dinsmore at supper.

'Don't be foolish.' Earle blushed with embarrassment and happiness.

'It's not a foolish idea at all,' said Mr. Libby, who had been as much impressed as any of the boys by the story. 'It was great stuff, Earle.'

'You've certainly got something to write home about, Earle,' said Reed.

'I bet he never would write home about it,' said Henry.

'I'll attend to that for him,' said Mr. Libby. 'I'll see that his father gets the whole story.'

And that assurance by Mr. Libby put the crown on Earle's happiness. It also caused the three benevolent conspirators to draw off together after supper and pledge themselves again most solemnly never to reveal to any one the truth about Henry's narrow escape from drowning.

So, as the end of his course at St. Timothy's drew near, Earle Castleman, who had been for two out of his three years there one of the least significant boys in the School, found himself talked of as a likely candidate for the highest

honor that could come to any St. Timothy's boy on graduation night — the School Medal, conferred on the boy who had exercised the widest and best influence among his fellows.

But the rector did not award that prize to Earle Castleman. In closing the little speech that he made to the whole School before announcing the award the rector said, 'I must ask you fellows all to remember that this is an affair of dignity, and that the occasion is one for applause and not for mirth. Yet I can't myself help smiling with something more than satisfaction and happiness when I say that the winner of our highest honor is Henry Dunn Noble.'

THE END

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 09899 409 6

BOOKS BY ARTHUR STANWOOD PIER

BOOKS FOR BOYS

'SOME of the best boys' stories of the time carry Mr. Pier's name on the title-page. His Boys of St. Timothy's books have always been popular with young readers. They are wholesome, lively, entertaining tales of schoolboy life and sports.' — *Detroit Free Press.*

The Boy from the West
The Rigor of the Game
Friends and Rivals: A Story of St. Timothy's
The Son Decides
The Jester of St. Timothy's
The Crashaw Brothers
The New Boy
Harding of St. Timothy's
Grannis of the Fifth
The Plattsburgers
Dormitory Days
The Hilltop Troop
David Ives

NOVELS

Confident Morning
Jerry

BOOKS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

MOTHER GOOSE LAND
By James Norman Hall

LITTLE RAG DOLL
By Ethel Calvert Phillips

THE GREEN DOOR
By Eliza Orne White

COME ALONG
By Josef Berger

SUSIE SUGARBEET
By Margaret Ashmun

FIVE LITTLE KATCHINAS
By Elizabeth Willis DeHuff

TINA MINA
By Dorothy Mayer

MORE ABOUT ME
By John Drinkwater

HAVING FUN
By Isa L. Wright

TWIN UMBRELLAS
By Marjorie Wilson

THE INDIAN TWINS
By Lucy Fitch Perkins

JUDITH LANKESTER
By Marjorie Hill Allee

A LITTLE MONEY AHEAD
By Elsie Singmaster

THE BOY FROM THE WEST
By Arthur Stanwood Pier

THE WHITE BEAVER
By James Willard Schultz

SUN GOLD
By Alice Cooper Bailey

OPENING DAVY JONES'S LOCKER
By Thames Williamson

TYPICAL PLAYS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
Edited by J. P. Webber and H. H. Webster

BEGINNING TO FLY
By Merrill Hamburg

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY